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FOUR LECTURES ON THE EARLY
HISTORY OF THE GOSPELS



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FOUR LECTURES
ON THE EARLY HISTORY
OF THE GOSPELS

DELIVERED AT MILBORNE PORT, SOMERSET

ADVENT, 1897

BY THE

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PREFACE.

THESE lectures, as now published, have received certain additions and improvements, but are still substantially the same as when they were delivered last Advent at Milborne Port.

They are principally based upon the researches of Dr. Adolf Harnack and Dr. Theodor Zahn, who have done so much to elucidate the early history of Christianity. I have also availed myself of the labours of several other writers, both English and German, to whom I desire to express my acknowledgments.

Canon Gore has somewhere remarked that ecclesiastical history "goes through a tunnel" during the earlier half of the second century. In the case of the literary history of the four gospels we might say that the tunnel runs back into the first century, and that we have to work in a tunnel, with but scanty glimpses of daylight, until we emerge from it about the middle of the second century.

It is, indeed, a remarkable fact that the origin of those books of the Bible, which have exercised the profoundest religious influence upon mankind, is

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wrapped in obscurity. We shall never know who wrote the magnificent prophecies of the latter part of Isaiah, or those deep and tender outpourings of religious emotion which have for so many centuries made the Psalms the Church's "Treasury of Devotion." And unless, and until, further discoveries reward the labours of our archaeologists, we must be content, in any attempt to write the literary history of the gospels, to confine ourselves to more or less probable conjectures.

The recent discovery of certain 'Sayings of Jesus' at Behnesa, the ancient Oxyrhynchus, in Egypt, has excited considerable interest all over the world. Their publication has already called forth a large number of articles and pamphlets, some of which are of great and permanent value. But, so far, I have not observed any attempt to sum up all that is known upon the subject generally, and to focus the converging lines of evidence into one connected whole. Dr. Sanday's invaluable lectures on the *Gospels in the Second Century* deal with the positions taken up by an earlier school of critics. The modern school of German critics, whose main representative is Professor Harnack, now admits the early origin of the gospels. The only question is whether certain portions of the Evangelic tradition, now embodied in our fourfold gospel, formed a part of the original gospel, or are later accretions. But whatever embroidery some of the narratives may have received in the hands of their early editors, those editors stood so near the actual facts that it is impossible that they should have been misinformed as to the main events of our Lord's life.

That He was morally supreme, and that He worked miracles is beyond all doubt.

It is not, however, my object to do more than endeavour to enable my readers to form some opinion for themselves as to the relative historical value of the various sources. Thus I should be disposed myself to value any part of the Gospel story which can be shown, with some approach to certainty, to have had a place in the ancient Logia, or the original S. Mark, more highly than the obviously later sources from which S. Luke and the fourth Evangelist drew part of their narrative.

It is in the hope that these lectures may reassure and stimulate others that I venture to lay them before the public.

J. H. W.

STOCK GAYLARD RECTORY,

February 24th, 1898.

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LECTURE I.

THE GOSPELS IN PALESTINE BEFORE 100 A.D.

WE have in our Bibles four gospels, or perhaps I should say, the gospel according to four editors, S. Matthew, S. Mark, S. Luke, and S. John, for in the earliest times people never spoke of gospels, but of 'the gospel.' What does this expression, 'according to,' mean? Are we to take it for granted, *e.g.* that S. Matthew wrote the first gospel just as we have it? I think it is almost universally agreed that this is not the case. S. Matthew wrote a gospel in Hebrew, or Aramaic, the native language of Palestine and Syria, and, long after, an unknown person translated and re-arranged this gospel of S. Matthew's, with additions, and called it 'the gospel according to S. Matthew.' You see he, in modern phrase, re-edited the gospel of S. Matthew.

This is also, I believe, in the main true of all the other gospels also. The gospel of S. Mark, as we have it, is not the original edition, though there have probably been very few changes made in it. The gospel of S. Luke has also been re-arranged and harmonized with the other gospels. On the face of

it, the way in which one gospel often repeats another demands some such explanation. And so, too, with S. John's gospel. Professor Harnack holds this gospel to have originally emanated from S. John the Apostle, that is, the *substance* of it emanated from him, but he thinks that it was added to and thrown into literary form by S. John, the presbyter of Ephesus. Of what nature was the source of the fourth gospel? Was it written or oral? It is impossible to say positively, but there is some evidence that it was a written source which the author of the Fourth gospel used. For there are, as we shall see, distinct traces of the use of a similar source in (1) the gospel according to the Hebrews, (2) the gospel of Peter, and (3) Basilides; and I shall endeavour to show some reason for thinking that this source was none other than the Logia, or original gospel of S. Matthew.

That the first three, commonly called the synoptic, gospels are to be traced back in the final resort to one primitive gospel, is now generally admitted. This, also, I believe to have been the Logia.

Two early off-shoots from this "Grundschrift," as the Germans call it, were enriched with additions from current tradition. These were the original gospels of S. Mark and S. Luke. The former was that portion of the primitive gospel which S. Peter used in his preaching, and to which he added graphic touches and personal recollections of his own. Thus we may describe the original gospel of S. Mark as made up from (1) the Logia, and (2) Petrine tradition. Similarly the original gospel of S. Luke must have been compiled from the Logia,

and that stream of current tradition which may, for convenience sake, be termed the Pauline tradition. There are, according to Feine, clear traces of Jewish-Christian and South Palestinian origin in this tradition. If you examine such a synoptic table as that given by Mr. Woods in *Studia Biblica*, Vol. II., you will find that the bulk of S. Mark's gospel is now contained in S. Luke's gospel. Eliminate this, and you have, in all probability, a near approach to the original gospel of S. Luke. The last editor of the third gospel combined the original gospels of S. Mark and S. Luke, thus forming our third gospel. Similarly, our first gospel is, for the most part, a combination of S. Mark and the Logia.

There is nothing in such conclusions which in any way derogates from the inspiration of the four gospels, because the editors, who thus arranged our gospels in their present form, were men who lived before, say, 115 A.D., less than a hundred years after Christ's ascension. There is some reason to believe that they were, all of them, like S. John, elders of the Church of Ephesus, and that Aristion was one of them; S. John and Aristion are called by Papias "disciples of the Lord," which, at any rate, means that they belonged to the first generation of Christians. Mr. Conybeare has proved that an Aristion wrote the last twelve verses of S. Mark's gospel. He has found an ancient Armenian MS., in which they are written separately, and a note at the head of them informs us that Aristion wrote them. It is, to say the least, highly probable that this Aristion is the same as the one mentioned by Papias. These elders of the Ephesian Church lived while tradition

about the Saviour was still handed on from mouth to mouth, and we need not regard our gospels as less sacred because apostolic men like Aristion and S. John the presbyter have had a hand in their composition.

PAPIAS.

After this general preface, let me now begin to trace back our gospels, as I am going to try to do, to their common original in Palestine. And, first of all, let me begin with what Papias, who was bishop of Hierapolis, in Asia, tells us. He probably died c. 140 A.D., and wrote a book called, *A Commentary on the Sayings of the Lord*. In the preface to this work, of which we have only a few brief scattered notices, he remarked that he himself had neither seen nor heard any of the Apostles; but he tells us that if he heard any saying of Christ, which had not otherwise reached him, from any of those elders who had known the Apostles, he took note of it, and used it in his work. He said, "I asked what Andrew or what Peter said, or what Philip, or Thomas, or James, or John, or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples, and what Aristion and John the presbyter, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I thought that what I got from books would not do me so much good as what I got from a living and abiding voice."

Thus Papias used both written and oral traditions about Christ. He must have been in a position to tell us the true history of the gospel. Has he then told us anything? Yes, he has given us two

valuable pieces of information. He tells us: "And this is what the elder used to say: Mark was Peter's interpreter, and wrote down exactly all that he remembered—not, however, in order—all that Christ either said or did. For he neither heard the Lord himself, nor followed Him, but afterwards, as I said, he became a follower of Peter, who used to adapt his teaching to the needs of the moment, but did not give, as it were, a connected account of the Lord's sayings; so that Mark is perfectly correct in his statements, but, in the manner I have indicated, only wrote down detached parts of the Lord's history, just as Peter recalled them. For he took care with regard to one thing, not to omit anything that he heard, nor to falsify any item thereof."

This is what Papias tells us of S. Mark: and of S. Matthew he tells us: "Matthew composed an account of the sayings of Christ in the Hebrew dialect, and every one translated them so far as he was able." The word used for 'Sayings' of Christ is 'Logia.' It is a word which means 'inspired sayings.' It is sometimes rendered 'oracles,' as in Acts vii. 38, "Who received the lively oracles to give unto us," where the reference is to Moses receiving the ten 'sayings,' which we call the ten commandments. But are we then to suppose that S. Matthew originally only wrote down the sayings of Christ, and not his doings as well? No, scholars are pretty well agreed that S. Matthew, in his 'Logia,' wrote a history of Christ to accompany his collection of His 'sayings.' This use of the word 'Logia' may be illustrated from S. Clement of Rome, who describes the whole of the Old Testa-

ment as 'the Logia of God.' But it is clear, I think, that the Logia of S. Matthew was written mainly to preserve a record of the words of the Lord Jesus. You will remember Christ's promise in S. John xiv. 26, that the Holy Ghost should bring back to the Apostles' minds all that He had said to them. I strongly suspect that those last discourses of our Lord, in which this promise is found, themselves formed part of the 'Logia'; but more of this presently. You will also recollect S. Paul's reference to one of the sayings of Christ, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive"¹ (Acts xx. 35). Perhaps he too is here quoting from the Logia.

Have we any means at all of finding out what sort of a work S. Matthew's Logia was? I think we have. There are certain remains of early gospels which show a strong relationship to S. Matthew's gospel, and I believe that in these we have traces of the lost Logia. I refer to the gospel according to the Hebrews, and the Ebionite gospel according to the Twelve.

THE EBIONITE GOSPEL.

The latter is to me especially interesting, for I cannot help thinking that in the beginning of this gospel, which happily is preserved for us in a quotation in Epiphanius (*c.* 370 A.D.), we have the nearest approach to the way in which the original

¹ This formula is also found in the First Epistle of Clement of Rome (93-95 A.D.), cp. 1 Cor. xiii. 1, and xlv. 7.

Logia of S. Matthew began. I should just say who the Ebionites were. They were the early Jewish Christians who lived in Palestine and Egypt. After all Jews were driven out from Jerusalem by Hadrian after Barcochba's revolt, A.D. 135, some Jewish Christians went westward to Caesarea, and thence to Egypt, and some eastward to Peraea and the country round Pella. These Jewish Christians were very poor, and were, probably, for that reason, called 'Ebionites,' or 'poor men.' We know from the collections which S. Paul made for them, how poor the Christians of Judaea were in his time. Originally all Jewish Christians seem to have been called Ebionites. But inasmuch as many Ebionites denied the Virgin birth of Christ, the term came to mean a Jewish Christian, who believed Christ to be a mere man, other orthodox Ebionites being distinguished as Nazarenes. The later gnostic Ebionites, however, admitted the Virgin birth. This we learn from the *Clementine Homilies* (*Clem. Hom.* iii. 20; see also Eusebius, *H.E.* iii. 27).

Zahn has collected the fragments of the Ebionite gospel from Epiphanius' work on the heresies. Epiphanius thus describes the gospel. "In the gospel which they use, a so-called gospel according to Matthew, but not an entire and complete copy of that gospel, but a bastard and mutilated form of it, and they call it the Hebrew gospel, we find, etc." With this agrees the statement of Irenaeus (c. 180 A.D.) that the Ebionites used only the gospel of S. Matthew. For 'the Hebrew gospel' Epiphanius uses the alternative expression, 'the gospel according to the Hebrews.' Now Origen (c. 230 A.D.) speaks

of a 'gospel according to the Twelve.' "The Church," he says, "has four gospels, the heresies very many, of which one is inscribed, that 'according to the Egyptians,' and another, that 'according to the Twelve Apostles' (*Hom. i. in Lucam*). And Jerome (c. 390 A.D.) identifies this 'gospel of the Twelve' with the 'gospel according to the Hebrews,' and the gospel of the Nazarenes. Similarly, Jerome says that both the Nazarenes and the Ebionites used the gospel according to the Hebrews, and Eusebius likewise tells us that those Ebionites who accepted the doctrine of the Virgin birth used the gospel according to the Hebrews. Zahn contends that the gospel according to the Hebrews was never translated into Greek until Jerome discovered a copy of it in the great library at Caesarea, and translated it both into Greek and Latin. Harnack, on the other hand, argues that it must have been translated into Greek at a very early period. I would suggest that the truth lies between them, and that the Ebionite gospel is, in the main, a translation of the Nazarene 'gospel according to the Hebrews'; but that for this purpose the translator used an already existing Greek translation of the Hebrew Logia of S. Matthew, and apparently also had S. Mark's original gospel before him. This Ebionite gospel would then be introduced into Egypt, and would naturally become known there as the gospel according to the Hebrews, in contradistinction to the gospel according to the Egyptians. Strictly speaking, however, it was only founded upon the Hebrew gospel, and omitted the account of our Lord's birth and genealogy which was contained in the Nazarene

gospel, besides altering or interpolating other passages. Now when we find (1) that both Jerome and Eusebius practically treat the Nazarene and Ebionite gospels as one and the same, and (2) that an alternative title for each of them appears to have been, 'that according to the Twelve,' and (3) that both these gospels are stated to have borne a strong resemblance to the gospel of S. Matthew, the conclusion naturally suggests itself that both these gospels are recensions of the Logia of S. Matthew, and that the Logia might for some reason be described as a 'gospel according to the Twelve.' What this reason was will appear when we read the beginning of the Ebionite gospel which, as we learn from Epiphanius, ran as follows :

"It was so, in the days of Herod, King of Judaea, John came baptising the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan; he was said to be of the family of Aaron the priest, a son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, and all men came unto him. There was a certain man named Jesus, and he was about thirty years old, who chose out us. And he came to Capernaum, and entered into the house of Simon, who was surnamed Peter, and opened his mouth, and said, 'As I was passing by the lake Tiberias, I chose out John and James, sons of Zebedee, and Simon, and Andrew, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, and I called you, Matthew, as you were sitting at the receipt of custom, and you followed me. I wish therefore you to be twelve Apostles for a testimony to Israel.'"

Now I see no reason why this may not have been modelled on, and perhaps in some parts a verbatim

copy of, the original beginning of S. Matthew's original gospel, the Logia. Zahn thinks this Ebionite gospel may be the one so frequently quoted in the *Clementine Homilies*, which is a gnostic Ebionite work. These quotations are, in the main, like our S. Matthew, which is another confirmation of my supposition that the Ebionite gospel is based on the Logia: for S. Matthew's gospel is confessedly nearer to the original Logia than any other of the four gospels. Bishop Westcott has examined these gospel quotations in the *Clementine Homilies*, and finds that there are about sixty coincidences with S. Matthew, three with S. Mark, six with S. Luke, and four with S. John.

But to return to the beginning of this Ebionite gospel, which I have just read to you. It is written in the name of the Twelve Apostles, and there is a special reference to S. Matthew. The rest of the Apostles were either fishermen, or at any rate not scholars, while S. Matthew had been accustomed to write as a clerk who collected taxes. I venture therefore to suggest that S. Matthew acted as scribe to the Twelve, and wrote down for them their individual recollections of the sayings of Christ, as also of the principal events of His life, and specially those all-important events which would be freshest in their recollection, His passion and resurrection. Thus I should imagine that each Apostle was made to speak in turn, and we seem to have a reminiscence of this in the end of the so-called 'gospel of Peter.' Near the end of that gospel we read, "But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, mourned and were grieved: and each one, grieving for that which was

come to pass, departed to his home. But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother, took our nets and went away to the sea, and there was with us Levi, the son of Alphaeus."

Here, you see, the twelve disciples write, and pass to the evidence of one of them in particular, Simon Peter. For that reason it is called the gospel of Peter, but it seems to be based upon an original gospel of the Twelve, and I suspect that it was compiled from the same gospel of the Twelve, from which the Ebionites compiled their gospel. Other apocryphal writings of this early age are written in the name of the twelve disciples, and it seems natural to suppose that these all follow the type set in the original gospel of S. Matthew, which may very well have been written by S. Matthew for the Twelve, and in their name.

This would account for the fact that S. John's gospel appears to have been used by the author of the gospel of Peter, and yet the author of that gospel is clearly ignorant of some things which are now in our Fourth gospel. A simple explanation would be that the so-called gospel of Peter and our Fourth gospel are both based upon this original gospel of the Twelve, in which the account of the passion of our Lord, and His last discourses which are preserved for us in the Fourth gospel, were originally contained. What more natural than that S. John, who came to be called *ὁ ἐπιστήθιος* 'he that lay in the Lord's bosom,' should supply the narrative of that part of the Logia, which dealt with the last discourses of our Lord; as also of that part of the passion, which he witnessed, when he alone of the

Apostles remained by the cross. This supposition is further confirmed by the fact that there is a strong relationship between the gospel of Peter and the gospel which is used in that old work 'the Instructions of the Apostles,'—the so-called *Didascalia*,—which has come down to us in Syriac, and is also contained in a Greek form in the Apostolical Constitutions.

The following passage, which I quote from Harnack's *Gospel of Peter* (p. 40), will sufficiently explain my meaning: "Resch (*Agrapha*, p. 319 A) was, so far as I know, the first to point out that in the source (Grundschrift) of the first six books of the Apostolical Constitutions, of which we now only possess a Syriac version, the so-called *Didascalia*, . . . a peculiar gospel is used which he has called the *Didascalia-gospel*. . . . The redactor of the Apostolical Constitutions, in his working over (*Bearbeitung*), has suppressed all, or nearly all, the apocryphal traits and details which characterize this gospel. Resch has collected them in Section 12 of his work. . . . Amongst the many apocryphal stories about the Evangelical History which are found in this *Didascalia*, one in particular excites our attention: it is said, v. 19 (Bunsen, *Anal. Antenic.* II., p. 320): 'The Gentile judge washed his hands and said: I am free from the blood of this just man, see ye to it—but Israel cried out: His blood be on us, and on our children. *And Herod the king ordered him to be crucified.*' It appears to me, in view of this passage, beyond all doubt that the *Didascalia-gospel* is the gospel of Peter."

This conclusion appears to Harnack inevitable,

since, in the gospel of Peter, as here, Herod is made responsible for Christ's death. He also points to the fact that Justin Martyr refers (*Dial.* 106) to the 'Memoirs of Peter' (*ἀπομνημονεύματα Πέτρου*). But 'the Memoirs of Peter' may, on my theory, be simply that part of the Logia in which S. Peter speaks, and the gospel of Peter and the *Didascalia* may both have used this source. Thus, instead of identifying them, I should prefer to refer them to a common source.

There are, then, certain indications that the original S. Matthew, the Logia, was a naïve, simple narrative thrown together in a curious unliterary way, and recounting, now in the person of one Apostle, now in that of another, the history, and more particularly, the inspired utterances, the 'logia' of our Lord Jesus Christ. It must have been at an early date translated into Greek, and formed the basis of our four gospels, as well as of the four chief uncanonical gospels. (See the two genealogies of the gospels, p. 26.)

And, if I am not mistaken, we still have traces of the beginning of this gospel in each of our four gospels. In S. Matthew ii. 1, we have, "In the days of Herod the king," which also occurs in S. Luke i. 5; and in S. Luke we have exactly the opening words of the Ebionite gospel, "There was in the days of Herod the king of Judaea." In S. Mark we read (following Westcott and Hort's text), "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God:—as it has been written, etc.: There was (*ἐγένετο*) John the Baptist in the wilderness, etc." Verses 2, 3 may be treated as a parenthesis.

Have we not here an actual reference to the 'beginning' of the traditional gospel?

And there is also the fact that both the Ebionite gospel and the gospel of S. Mark begin with the baptism of John. It is not impossible that the original Aramaic gospel began there. In Acts i. 21, 22, we have the gospel period described as "all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us." Some eminent scholars (*e.g.* Blass) have of recent years contended that there must have been a double edition of S. Luke and the Acts. Blass thinks S. Luke himself edited both editions, but this appears unlikely. Ramsay thinks that both the Eastern and Western texts of S. Luke are to be traced back to an earlier text, of which they are more or less corrupt forms. Thus the conclusions of such critics make the supposition that there was an original S. Luke, earlier than our third gospel, highly probable. And it seems possible, though by no means certain, that this first edition of S. Luke's gospel also began with the preaching of S. John the Baptist. The narrative of our Lord's birth would for obvious reasons at first be kept secret, and the evidence seems to show that it had no place in the Logia. S. John's gospel also begins with the baptism of John. After the preface, we have, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." If we combine the opening formula of S. Luke and the Ebionite gospel with that traceable in S. John, we get what may have been something like the original form. "There was in the days of

Herod, the King of Judaea, a man sent from God, whose name was John." The title, 'Herod, the King of Judaea,' would naturally refer to Herod the Great, but it is clear that the expression might also be used in either of Archelaus or Antipas. For Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 103) calls the Herod of the time of the Crucifixion 'the King of the Jews.' He is expounding Psalm xxii., and refers the words "as it were a ramping and a roaring lion" to Herod. The Psalmist "signifies him who was then the King of the Jews, who was himself also called Herod, having become successor to that Herod, who destroyed the children in Bethlehem." After describing this event, the flight into Egypt, and the death of Herod the Great, Justin proceeds, "And Archelaus succeeded him, and he died before the Christ fulfilled upon the Cross the divinely planned dispensation of the Father: but when Herod, the successor of Archelaus, had taken up the power which had been assigned to him, to whom also Pilate, wishing to do him a favour, sent Jesus bound, this also was foreknown of God, etc."

I should like you to notice the first word in these various beginnings—'Ἐγένετο—it is a rendering of the Hebrew *va y'hi* (וַיְהִי), which recurs so frequently in the Old Testament. This Hebrew idiom is in itself an indication of Aramaic origin. We find it in connection with the beginning of the following gospels: S. Mark, "*There was* John the Baptist in the wilderness, etc."; S. Luke, "*There was* in the days of Herod, etc."; S. John, "*There was* a man sent, etc."; and the Ebionite gospel, "*It was so* in the days of Herod . . . John came baptising." In the

last case what follows joins on so awkwardly that one seems to see a very early attempt to preserve the traditional beginning of the gospel by some Jewish Christian who could not write Greek very well. There is also a striking parallel between the beginning of the Ebionite gospel and the beginning of Marcion's gospel. The latter opens thus: "In the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, in the times of Pontius Pilate, Jesus came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee." Compare with this the "And he came to Capernaum" of the Ebionite gospel.

Before leaving this gospel, I must just add a few words as to the points in it which are distinctly Ebionite. These show traces of the sect of the Elkesaites, who perhaps introduced their special tenets into the Greek Logia about the middle of the second century. The Elkesaites abhorred sacrifice, and objected to the use of flesh meat. Accordingly in one place our Lord is made to say, "I came to put an end to sacrifices, and until ye cease from sacrifices, the wrath of God shall not cease from you," and in another place rather than admit that John the Baptist ate locusts, they made a slight alteration of the text ἄγκρις, a locust, into ἑγκρις, a honeycake! Zahn thinks that the Ebionites used all our four gospels in compiling their gospel. This is probably so far true, that they used the original S. Mark, and original S. Luke, but what I have been suggesting is that they followed, so to say, the framework of the old Greek translation of the Logia, the common original of our four gospels.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE HEBREWS.

But now I must pass to another early gospel, the gospel according to the Hebrews.

We have already seen that this gospel and the Ebionite gospel largely resembled one another. Origen speaks hesitatingly as to its value. He refers to it just in the same sort of way as he refers to the Epistle of S. Jude—introducing a quotation from it in an apologetic manner—"If any one likes to receive it." Eusebius too admits that some people placed it in the same category as the Catholic epistles, the so-called *Antilegomena*, or books as to the canonicity of which there was some doubt. He tells us that the Hebrew Christians prized it highly. He himself, however, did not go the length of treating it as a canonical book, but quotes it as a valuable legacy from antiquity, using it for instance as a guide in the interpretation of a parable. Of the better sort of Ebionites, those, viz., who believed in the Virgin birth of Christ, he remarks—"But they thought that all the Epistles of the Apostle (*i.e.* S. Paul) should be rejected, calling him an apostate from the law, and, while using only that gospel which is called that according to the Hebrews, they took small account of the other gospels."

The gospel according to the Hebrews was found in Hebrew by S. Jerome when he came to Palestine, and he was so much struck by its relationship to our S. Matthew that he declared it to be its Hebrew original. This shows us that it must at

least have strongly resembled our first gospel, but it certainly could not, in the form in which S. Jerome found it, have been the long lost Logia, because it contains some things which are clearly late and apocryphal. But I have no doubt that in some ways it is much nearer the original form of the Logia than our S. Matthew, since it is much more Hebrew in its ideas and expressions. The following extracts will sufficiently demonstrate this. I follow Zahn's collection of the fragments (*History of the Canon of the N.T.*, II. 689). He has gathered them from various sources, *e.g.* Hegesippus (*c.* 180 A.D.), quoted by Eusebius; Clement of Alexandria (*c.* 194 A.D.); Origen, who, we learn, frequently quoted this gospel, but only three of his quotations are preserved; but, above all, from Jerome, who gives us most of the information which we possess on the subject. In the section which records our Lord's baptism, this gospel runs as follows: "Behold the Lord's mother and His brethren said unto Him, 'John the Baptist baptiseth for the remission of sins, let us go and be baptised by him.' But He said unto them, 'Wherein have I sinned that I should go and be baptised by him? unless perchance this very thing which I have said is ignorance.' . . . Now it came to pass when the Lord had come up out of the water, the whole fountain of the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon Him, and said unto Him, 'My Son, in all the prophets I awaited Thee, that Thou shouldest come, and I might rest upon Thee. For Thou art My rest, Thou art My firstborn Son, who reignest for ever.'"

On the Temptation it has the following curious verse—"My mother, the Holy Spirit, lately took me by one of My hairs, and carried Me to the great mountain Tabor."

Again the man with the withered hand is made to say "I was a mason, seeking my living by (the labour of) my hands; I pray Thee, Jesus, to restore me my health, that I may not beg my bread in disgrace."

S. Peter, in another fragment, is bidden to forgive his brother "unto seventy times seven," and it is added, "For in the prophets also, after they had been anointed with the Holy Spirit, there was found sinful speech."

In the section about the rich man's question, the gospel according to the Hebrews mentions two rich men, one of whom is the questioner. Instead of saying 'Good Master, etc.,' he is made to say, "Master, what good thing shall I do that I may live." And after our Lord's answer to this question the narrative proceeds: "But the rich man began to scratch his head and was displeased. And the Lord said to him, 'How canst thou say thou hast kept the law and the prophets, since it is written in the law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; and behold many of thy brethren, the children of Abraham, are clothed with dung and dying with hunger, while thy house is full of many good things, and nothing is sent out of it to them.' And turning to His disciple Simon, who sat beside Him, He said, 'Simon, son of John, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

There is also a particular account of the appearance of the Risen Lord to S. James as follows: "Now the Lord, when He had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, went to James, and appeared to him. For James had taken an oath that he would not eat bread from that hour on which he had drunk the cup of the Lord till he saw Him risen from the dead." Then our Lord says, "Bring a table and bread," and a little further on it is added, "He took bread and blessed and brake and gave it to James the Just, and said to him, 'My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from the dead.'"

Lastly, on another occasion, when He appeared to His disciples after the resurrection, the Lord was made to say, "I am not a spirit without a body."

These are the principal fragments.

Now it is a distinct Hebraism to represent the Holy Spirit as a feminine principle, as this gospel does, both in the record of the Baptism, and in that of the Temptation, and there is a striking parallel in the words, "took me by one of the hairs of my head" in Ez. viii. 3, "And He put forth the form of an hand and took me by a lock of mine head; and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem." The curious details which are added to the story of the man with the withered hand, and again in the case of the rich man's question, may very possibly be derived from an early and trustworthy tradition, though it must be confessed that they may equally well be embellishments added by the pious fancy of the

writer. This latter explanation is indeed the only possible one in the case of the section about S. James. It must be an invented narrative, as Dr. Salmon suggests, designed to supplement the bare tradition (see 1 Cor. xv. 7) that Christ appeared to S. James.

But the addition of such apocryphal details is not at all inconsistent with a very early date. In fact, it rather points to a time when there was not such extreme veneration for the *littera scripta* as there came to be later when the Canon was closed.

We also learn from Eusebius that the parable of the talents was altered in this gospel, so as not to inflict so severe a penalty on mere sloth. There are three servants: one multiplies his talent; another hides it; the third wastes it with harlots and riotous living. The second is only rebuked; the third is cast into prison. Here Dr. Salmon is again doubtless right in seeing the handiwork of a corrector who fancies that he is making an improvement, and really changes for the worse.

There are also two 'logia' of Christ which are found in this gospel, and which may very well be genuine. One is incomplete. We are simply told that "he who shall have grieved the spirit of his brother" is ranked amongst the greatest criminals. The other is, "Never rejoice except when you have looked upon your brother in love."

Two other interesting points in the gospel according to the Hebrews are that, instead of relating that the vail of the Temple was rent, it told that a lintel of the Temple, of immense size, was shattered ;

and that in the Lord's Prayer, instead of daily bread, it had bread for the morrow. In an article in the *Expositor*, about two years ago, these variations were shown to be explained by a different reading of the same Aramaic letters. Two Aramaic words, by a slight change of pointing, or the misreading of a letter, appear in these other cases to have been confused with each other. In this case, it seems more likely that an earthquake would throw down a lintel than that it should rend a vail. The other variant, "bread for the morrow," is more doubtful. Professor Marshall, of Manchester, has attempted to explain many of the variations in the text of our first three gospels in this manner. It will be seen presently that the original S. Mark and original S. Luke probably both used the Hebrew Logia. Our first gospel appears rather to be based on the Greek Logia. But if the Greek Logia, the original S. Mark, and the original S. Luke all made independent translations of parts of the Logia, such a theory as Professor Marshall's would seem to have some *a priori* probability. On the other hand, his instances of variant translations have been much disputed by Aramaic scholars. It appears from S. Jerome that the gospel according to the Hebrews included S. Matthew ii., and, therefore, I suppose also S. Matthew i. Harnack, indeed, differs from Zahn on this point, but, in order to support his contention, has to impugn the good faith of S. Jerome. Here, I think, we should hardly be inclined to go with him. We are not obliged to believe that the original gospel according to the Hebrews contained

the first two chapters of S. Matthew. I am indeed inclined to think that it did not, but received accretions both at the beginning and the end, as well as various embellishments (what Zahn¹ calls *harmlose Auspinnungen*) in the intermediate parts.

In two places the gospel according to the Hebrews agrees rather with S. Luke than S. Matthew. Thus, instead of saying that the Devil, in the Temptation, took our Lord to "the holy city," it says, as S. Luke does, that he took Him "to Jerusalem." Again, in that other fragment, to which I have already referred, "I am not a spirit without a body"—it would seem likely that the gospel according to the Hebrews draws from S. Luke. For we gather from Ignatius that these words occurred in a context closely related to the narrative of S. Luke xxiv. 39. Ignatius (*ad Smyr.* 3), without naming his authority, says—"And when after His resurrection He came to Peter and His company, He said, 'Take, handle Me, and see that I am not a spirit without a body.'" Of course it is possible that both the gospel according to the Hebrews and Ignatius draw from the Logia. But as tradition says that S. Luke wrote his gospel in Antioch, and Ignatius was Bishop of Antioch, and, moreover, the passage reminds us of S. Luke xxiv. 39, it seems highly probable that Ignatius is here quoting from the original S. Luke. But did both the gospel according to the Hebrews and S. Luke draw from the same source? This is a question which cannot be answered with certainty, but I am inclined to think that the final

¹ *N. T. Canon*, I. 776.

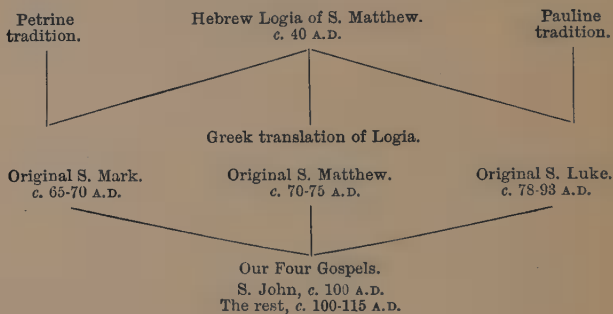
editor of the gospel according to the Hebrews had both the Logia and the original S. Luke before him.

But there are also two passages in this gospel which agree with S. John, and these cannot well have been derived from any but very primitive sources. Yet it will be seen that one at least of these coincidences was certainly not a case of copying from our Fourth gospel. In the Syrian translation of the *Theophany* of Eusebius we are told (if Zahn's translation be right) that the following verse stood in this gospel—"I will choose me the good: the good are those whom My Father in heaven has given Me." This suggests the sort of thing which originally stood in that part of the Logia, which developed into our Fourth gospel. Again, Eusebius tells us that the story of the woman taken in adultery was contained in this gospel. Dr. Salmon sums up the results of textual criticism, as applied to this section of S. John's gospel, by remarking that "it is wanting in the most ancient MSS.; in a few copies it is absent from the place where it occurs in the received text, but is added at the end of the gospel, and in five MSS. of S. Luke it is inserted at the end of the twenty-first chapter of that gospel." It seems to have been a genuine apostolic tradition, but it is impossible to say whether it was derived by the author of this gospel from the Logia, or from some other source. I am inclined, however, to adopt the former alternative: for it would seem that the narrative was omitted in the later editions of the gospel, on the ground that its moral teaching was

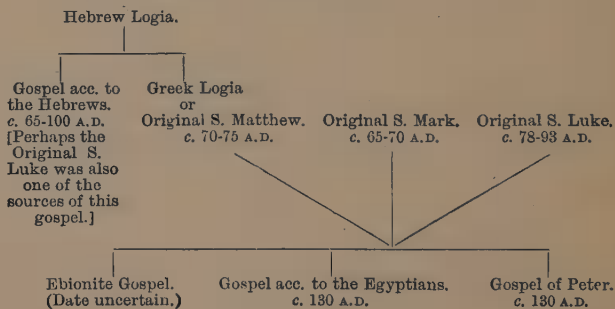
not adapted to the needs of the pagan world. If we hold with Harnack that the gospel according to the Hebrews dates back into the first century, it seems quite impossible that this narrative could have been derived from our Fourth gospel. It may, of course, have reached the gospel according to the Hebrews from oral tradition. Some writers have indeed held that the originals of our first three gospels were all unwritten. They speak of the "triple tradition" which ultimately assumed a written literary form, but was for many years only handed down orally, *i.e.* by catechetical instruction. Scholars tend generally now to take an opposite view, and to trace back the synoptic gospels to written sources. It would seem that while, of course, large portions of the gospels would be committed to memory by the catechumens, yet the catechists themselves used written gospels, which would be kept together with the sacred rolls containing the Old Testament in the "armarium," or church-chest. Thus, on the whole, it seems more probable that the author of our gospel found this narrative in the Logia than that he derived it from some unwritten source.

We may now sum up the results so far attained in the following genealogy of our four gospels, to which I will also add by way of anticipation a genealogy of the four chief uncanonical gospels. The dates (except the first) are according to Harnack's Chronology.

I.—GENEALOGY OF OUR FOUR GOSPELS.



II.—GENEALOGY OF THE FOUR CHIEF UNCANONICAL GOSPELS.



LECTURE II.

THE GOSPELS IN EGYPT *c.* 100—150 A.D.

FIVE years ago (1892) M. Bouriant discovered in a tomb at Akhmîm, in Egypt, a MS. containing fragments of the gospel of Peter, the Apocalypse of Peter, and other writings. Before this fragment was found, all we knew of the gospel of Peter was from a letter of Serapion, who was Bishop of Antioch, 190—203 A.D. This letter begins: "We, brethren, receive Peter and the other Apostles even as Christ; but the writings that go falsely by their names we, in our experience, reject." And towards the end of his letter he says: "From others who used this very gospel—the successors of those who started it, whom we call Docetae, for most of its ideas are of their school—from them, I say, I borrowed it, and was able to go through it, and to find that most of it belonged to the right teaching of the Saviour, but some things were additions." This gives exactly the same impression as our fragment does, viz. that we have in this gospel, in the main, a genuine record of our Lord's life based on very early authorities, but that certain heretics have inserted in it some of their own peculiar doctrines.

It appears to be based on the Greek Logia, and the original gospels of S. Mark and S. Luke. But let us read the fragment itself. I avail myself of Mr. Armitage Robinson's translation.

THE GOSPEL OF PETER.

“But of the Jews none washed his hands, neither Herod nor any of his judges. And when they wished to wash them, Pilate rose up. And then Herod, the king, commandeth that the Lord be taken, saying to them, ‘What things soever I commanded you to do unto him, do.’ And there was come there Joseph, the friend of Pilate and of the Lord, and knowing that they were about to crucify Him, he came to Pilate and asked for the body of the Lord for burial. And Herod said, ‘Brother Pilate, even if no one had asked Him, we should have buried Him; for it is written in the law that the sun go not down on him that is put to death on the day before the unleavened bread.’”

There is nothing impossible in Joseph coming to Pilate before the crucifixion, and that Pilate asked Herod's leave is likely enough. The same desire to pay him a compliment, which made him send our Lord to Herod, may have led him to assign Herod a much more active part in our Lord's crucifixion than we have hitherto imagined: and this is confirmed by the fragment of the Didascalia-gospel already quoted (p. 12).

“And they took the Lord, and pushed Him as they ran, and said, ‘Let us drag away the Son of God, having obtained power over Him.’ And

they clothed Him with purple, and set Him on the seat of judgment, saying, 'Judge righteously, O King of Israel.' And one of them brought a crown of thorns, and put it on the head of the Lord. And others stood and spat in His eyes, and others smote His cheeks; others pricked Him with a reed; and some scourged Him, saying, 'With this honour let us honour the Son of God.'"

Here we have two remarkable parallels in S. John's gospel and Justin Martyr. Dr. Hort agrees with Archbishop Whately that in S. John xix. 13 (*καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος*), which reads in our version, "And Pilate brought Jesus forth and *sat down* on the judgment seat," the true translation is, 'brought Jesus forth and *set Him* on the judgment seat.' It may therefore be presumed that our fragment here draws from the same source as our Fourth gospel. There is a still more remarkable parallel in Justin Martyr (*Apol.* i. 35): "For, as the prophet said, they dragged Him, and set Him on the judgment seat, and said, 'Judge for us.'" The simplest explanation of these parallels is that all three—the gospel of Peter, the gospel of S. John, and Justin Martyr—are quoting from the Greek Logia.

"And they brought two malefactors, and they crucified the Lord between them. But He held His peace as having no pain." It would be possible to lay stress on the little word 'as,' and argue that this means 'as if He had no pain, whereas He really had, but bore it silently.' But it seems much more likely that the writer believed Christ to have really suffered no pain. For this reason he omits

all mention of His cry of pain, "I thirst." He must have held docetic views, and have regarded our Lord as a phantasm, a being from another world, who felt no pain. Docetae is a common name for all those sects who, in varying forms, held the common doctrine that Christ had a body in appearance only, not in reality. Some, indeed, made a distinction between the 'Man Jesus' and the 'æon' or divine emanation 'Christ,' which, they said, descended upon Him at His Baptism; but others taught that he was altogether a phantasm. In this case we seem to be dealing with the former type of docetism, because, as we shall see presently, the writer represents the man Jesus as rising again from His grave, whereas the logos 'Christ' leaves the man Jesus at the moment of death.

"And when they had raised the cross, they wrote upon it, 'This is the King of Israel.' And having set His garments before Him, they parted them among them, and cast a lot for them. And one of those malefactors reproached them, saying, 'We have suffered thus for the evils that we have done, but this man having become the Saviour of men, what wrong hath He done to you?' And they, being angered at Him, commanded that His legs should not be broken, that He might die in torment. And it was noon, and darkness covered all Judaea: and they were troubled and distressed, lest the sun had gone down, since He yet lived; for it was written for them that the sun go not down on him that is put to death. And one of them said, 'Give Him to drink gall with vinegar.' And they mixed and gave Him to drink,

and fulfilled all things, and accomplished their sins against their own head. And many went about with lamps, supposing that it was night, and fell down. And the Lord cried out saying, 'My Power, My Power, Thou hast forsaken Me.' And when He had said it, He was taken up."

This is not necessarily a docetic passage. In an old Greek version of the LXX. (Aquila), "Eli, Eli," was rendered something very like "My power, My power," and again, "He was taken up," may simply mean "His spirit was taken up." But, on the other hand, it is more probable that it is a docetic passage, because it corresponds exactly with the description which Irenaus gives of the opinions of certain Docetae, viz. "that one Christ suffered and rose again, and another flew up and remained free from suffering." "And in that hour the vail of the Temple of Jerusalem was rent in twain. And they drew out the nails from the hands of the Lord, and laid Him upon the earth, and the earth all quaked, and great fear arose. Then the sun shone, and it was found the ninth hour; and the Jews rejoiced, and gave His body to Joseph that he might bury it, since he had seen what good things he had done. And he took the Lord, and washed Him, and rolled Him in a linen cloth, and brought Him into His own tomb, which was called the garden of Joseph."

Here again, like S. John, our author mentions the nails and the garden; once more they draw from the same source.

Justin Martyr probably also had the same source before him, when he accuses the Jews of going about saying: "His disciples stole Him by night

from the tomb, where He was laid when He was *unnailed* from the Cross" (*Dial.* 108). "Then the Jews, and the elders, and the priests, seeing what evil they had done to themselves, began to lament and to say, 'Woe for our sins! for the judgment and the end of Jerusalem hath drawn nigh.'" The cry of woe is also found in Tatian's *Diatessaron*, and Mrs. Lewis' Syriac version. In all these cases the source is probably the Logia.

In the case of Tatian, our authority is Ephraem, who reads in S. Luke xxiii. 48, "Woe was it, woe was it to us: this was the Son of God." The Lewis palimpsest reads, "Woe unto us, what hath befallen us! Woe unto us for our sins." "And I with my companions was grieved; and being wounded in mind, we hid ourselves: for we were being sought for by them as malefactors, and as wishing to set fire to the Temple. And upon all these things we fasted and sat mourning and weeping night and day until the Sabbath. But the scribes and Pharisees and elders being gathered together, one with another, when they heard that all the people murmured, and beat their breasts, saying, 'If by His death these most mighty signs have come to pass, see how just He is,' the elders were afraid and came to Pilate, beseeching him and saying, 'Give us soldiers that they may watch His sepulchre for three days, lest His disciples come and steal Him away, and the people suppose that He is risen from the dead, and do us evil.' And Pilate gave them Petronius the centurion, with soldiers, to watch the tomb. And the elders and scribes came with them to the sepulchre, and having rolled a great stone

together with the centurion and the soldiers, they all together, who were there, set it at the door of the sepulchre: and they put upon it seven seals, and they pitched a tent there, and kept watch. And early in the morning, as the Sabbath was drawing on, there came a multitude from Jerusalem, and the region round about, that they might see the sepulchre that was sealed. And in the night in which the Lord's day was drawing on, as the soldiers kept watch, two by two on guard, there was a great voice in the heaven: and they saw the heavens opened, and two men descending thence with great light, and approaching the tomb. And that stone, which was put at the door, rolled away of itself, and departed to one side; and the tomb was opened, and both the young men entered in. When therefore the soldiers saw it, they awakened the centurion and the elders; for they were hard by keeping watch."

What follows in the next section I strongly suspect to have been inserted by our author from Elkesaite sources. "And as they declared what things they had seen, again they see coming forth from the tomb three men, and the two supporting the one, and a Cross following them. And of the two the head reached unto the heaven, but the head of Him that was led by them overpassed the heavens. And they heard a voice from the heavens, saying, 'Hast thou preached to them that sleep?' And an answer was heard from the Cross, 'Yea.'"

This was most certainly not found by our author in any of those sources which were common to him and our first three gospels. It was doubtless a

legendary accretion which had grown up amongst the Elkesaites. These were Jewish sectaries who came originally from Parthia: or perhaps one should say, traced their origin to Parthia. According to the book of Elkesai their doctrines were derived from the Serians in Parthia. Mention is also made of this in the pseudo-Clementines. They were not unlike the Essenes in their asceticism, amongst other things practising daily baptism. We know from the book of Elkesai, which, though a later production, reflects beliefs long current amongst them, that they taught curious doctrines, in which gigantic angels largely figure: and we know that they exercised a profound influence on those Christians of whom we read in the pseudo-Clementine literature.¹ Now these Christians are represented as special followers of S. Peter, and they appear to have believed that Christ was a sort of Avatar, who had successive incarnations in the prophets, and finally in Christ. This is a distinctly docetic form of doctrine. Hence we may conjecture that the author of the gospel of Peter was an Elkesaite, or gnostic Ebionite. It may be asked "Is it possible that the gospel of Peter is part of the Ebionite gospel?" But it cannot be that, for (1) though in one section it seems like the Ebionite gospel to be written in the name of the Twelve, in two others S. Peter speaks, and in one of these, "I and my companions were grieved," it is quite clear that the gospel was written in his name, and not in that of the Twelve. The mention of the

¹ A clear and succinct account of the Elkesaites is to be found in Kurtz' *Church History*, English translation, Vol. I., p. 122.

Twelve in the first person plural is probably a direct quotation from the Logia. (2) The gospel of Peter is quoted as such, and as quite distinct from the Ebionite gospel. At the same time, I see no reason why the Ebionite gospel may not have been the earlier form of gospel used by the Ebionites generally, while the gospel of Peter was the form, and probably a shorter form, used by the gnostic Ebionites in particular. But let us finish reading the fragment.

“They, therefore, considered one with another whether to go away and show these things to Pilate. And while they yet thought thereon, the heavens again appear opened, and a certain man descending, and entering into the sepulchre. When the centurion, and they that were with him, saw these things, they hastened by night to Pilate, leaving the tomb which they were watching, and declared all things which they had seen, being distressed, and saying, ‘Truly, He was the Son of God.’ Pilate answered and said, ‘I am pure from the blood of the Son of God: but ye determined this.’ Then they all drew near and besought him, and entreated him to command the centurion, and the soldiers, to say nothing of the things which they had seen. ‘For it is better,’ say they, ‘for us to owe the greatest debt of sin before God, and not to fall into the hand of the people of the Jews, and to be stoned.’ Pilate, therefore, commanded the centurion and the soldiers to say nothing. And at dawn upon the Lord’s Day, Mary Magdalen, a disciple of the Lord, [who] fearing because of the Jews, since they were burning with wrath, had not done

at the Lord's sepulchre the things which the women are wont to do for those that die, and are beloved by them, took her friends with her, and came to the sepulchre, where He was laid. And they feared lest the Jews should see them, and they said, 'Even if on that day on which He was crucified we could not weep and lament, yet now let us do these things at His sepulchre. But who shall roll away for us the stone that is laid at the door of the sepulchre, that we may enter in, and sit by Him, and do the things that are due? For the stone was great, and we fear lest some one see us. And even if we cannot, yet let us set at the door the things which we bring for a memorial of Him; let us weep and lament until we come unto our home.' And they went away, and found the tomb opened, and coming near they looked in there; and they see there a certain young man sitting in the midst of the tomb, beautiful and clothed in a very bright robe; who said to them, 'Why are ye come? Whom seek ye? Is it that crucified one? He is risen and gone away. But if ye believe not, look in and see the place where He lay, that He is not [here]: for He is risen, and gone away thither, whence He was sent.' Then the women feared and fled."

On this, Mr. Armitage Robinson remarks, "This passage is full of the peculiar phrases of S. Mark. The correspondence, too, ends with the abrupt conclusion of S. Mark's gospel, as we now have it, and there is no trace of the twelve disputed verses.' Professor Harnack, therefore, thinks we ought to look for the type of what originally was the ending of S. Mark's gospel in what follows.

“Now it was the last day of the unleavened bread, and many went forth, returning to their homes as the feast was ended. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, mourned and were grieved: and each one, grieving for that which was come to pass, departed to his home. But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother took our nets, and went away to the sea; and there was with us Levi, the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord, etc.”

Here the fragment abruptly ends. The remarkable thing is that there is no mention of S. Peter and S. John going to the tomb. Had the author of the gospel of Peter known our gospel of S. John, he must have put in this episode. It has been suggested that the narrative of S. John xxi. (probably in a simpler and shorter form) originally followed in the lost ending of the gospel of Peter. That is quite possible, if both our Fourth gospel and the gospel of Peter drew from common sources. In fact, S. Mark may have originally contained this narrative in the lost ending of his gospel, and Harnack may be right in accepting the theory of Rohrbach, that the elders of the Church of Ephesus, who edited the gospels, as we have them, removed this narrative from the end of S. Mark (substituting a shorter ending) and placed it at the end of the Fourth gospel.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE EGYPTIANS.

We will now pass to the gospel according to the Egyptians.

English readers will find an interesting account

of this gospel in a paper, by Professor Harnack, on the *New Logia*, published in the *Expositor*, December, 1897. Origen names it as the first example of heretical gospels. "The Church has four gospels; the heresies very many, of which one is inscribed that 'according to the Egyptians' (*Hom.* i., in *Luc.*). Writing about the same time as Origen, Hippolytus (*Ref.* v. 7), or rather the Naassene MS. used by Hippolytus, and which he probably found in Egypt, refers to the gospel according to the Egyptians; by which same title Clement of Alexandria also several times quotes it. We must not imagine from the title that it was written in Egyptian or Coptic. The expression of Epiphanius (*Haer.* LXII. 2), 'the gospel, which is called Egyptian,' is exactly parallel to his description of the Ebionite gospel, which he similarly denominates 'the Hebrew gospel.' In each case the gospel was written in Greek, and named, not from the language in which it was written, but from the nationality of the people amongst whom it circulated. Epiphanius goes on to say of this gospel, which 'is called Egyptian'—'In it many such things (*i.e.* as the Sabellian heresy, which he imputes to it) are supposititiously introduced (*ὡς ἐν παπαβύστῳ*, lit. stuffed in) and placed in the mouth of the Saviour, with a mystical signification.' The modalistic teaching of the Naassene tract cited by Hippolytus, as quoting this gospel, confirms this statement of Epiphanius, who also tells us that in his day the Libyan Pentapolis was the headquarters of the Sabellian heresy. Harnack justly points out that Modalism was current in the Church before the date of Sabellius (*c.* 220 A.D.).

He seems to think it possible that Modalism was at the date of the gospel according to the Egyptians an orthodox opinion, and, as such, placed, in this gospel, in the mouth of the Saviour. It was the use which the Encratites and their leader, Cassian, made of this gospel, which was to Clement of Alexandria its salient feature, and *à propos* of which he quotes it several times, especially *Strom.* III. 93, with the comment, 'We have not this saying in the four gospels which have been handed down to us, but in that according to the Egyptians.'"

I will deal first with what I believe to have been the source of the gospel we are considering, but which Harnack has treated as the gospel according to the Egyptians itself, viz. the gospel quoted in the so-called second epistle of S. Clement of Rome. This is really not an epistle, but a sermon, and scholars are agreed that it is very ancient, dating from the first half of the second century. It seems to have been sent to Corinth from Rome by Bishop Soter (*c.* 170 A.D.). There, as an ancient Roman composition, it was read in connection with the first epistle of Clement of Rome, and in time came to be regarded as part of that epistle. Thus it certainly dates from 170 A.D., and most scholars agree that it was originally composed as early as 130 or 140 A.D. Thus it belongs to our period, and the gospel quoted in it may be shown to have been used in Egypt during the first half of the second century. For we learn from Clement of Alexandria that the gospel according to the Egyptians contained a saying which we also find amongst the quotations from the gospel in II.

Clement. But the quotation in the gospel according to the Egyptians has what I cannot but think is an apocryphal addition. Professor Harnack, indeed, takes an opposite view, but on what grounds I fail to discover. We will, however, examine some of the quotations from the gospel which are found in II. Clement, and first, this particular quotation which is common to II. Clement and the gospel according to the Egyptians. It runs as follows: "For the Lord Himself, on being asked by someone (the Syriac version adds, 'of the apostles'), 'When shall the kingdom come?' said, 'When the two shall be one, and the outward as the inward, and the male one with the female neither male nor female . . . when you find men act thus, the kingdom of My Father shall come.'" In the gospel according to the Egyptians this quotation appears in a fuller form, "To Salome, when she asked, 'How long shall death prevail?' the Lord said, 'So long as you women bring forth children. For I came to destroy the works of the female.' And Salome said unto Him, 'Should I then have done well if I had borne no children?' But the Lord answered, saying, "Eat of every herb, but eat not of that which has a bitter taste.' . . . 'When shall those things whereof she asked be known'; the Lord said, 'When ye shall have trampled underfoot the garment of shame, and when the two shall become one, and the male one with the female, neither male nor female.'" ¹

Surely we have here an expanded and apocryphal

¹ Quoted by Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* III. 45, 63, 64, 66, 91-93.

form of the saying as quoted in II. Clement. But is the logion, even in its shorter form, genuine? It may be. We know our Lord said, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (S. Matt. xxii. 30), and I suspect we have here a similar saying as to the nature of the resurrection body. But in the gospel according to the Egyptians it is made to wear the appearance of a direct discouragement of marriage, which it is hard to believe came from the lips of Jesus Christ, or found a place in a gospel so ancient and so highly venerated as the one quoted in II. Clement. It appears much more probable that the logion as found in the gospel according to the Egyptians is a saying of Christ converted to His own purposes by an ascetic writer. It is true, indeed, that this was apparently the only verse in the gospel according to the Egyptians which the Encratites, who were vegetarians and celibates, could quote in favour of their views, but that need not prove more than that the writer of this gospel was an ascetic who wrote before the rise of the sect of the Encratites, which is probable on other grounds—for S. Jerome tells us that Tatian was the patriarch of the Encratites. The author of the gospel according to the Egyptians would appear to have tampered with the gospel from which he drew his materials, and to have made additions to it, but not to such an extent as to make it entirely unacceptable to orthodox people like Clement of Alexandria, who, however, sharply distinguishes it from the four canonical gospels.

If, then, the gospel used in II. Clement be taken

to be the source of the gospel according to the Egyptians, what was it? I see no reason why it should not have been simply the Greek Logia. All the quotations in II. Clement seem to come from one source. They read like free citations from our gospels, not from any one of them, but from a mixture of the first three, the Synoptic, gospels. And one at least of these citations appears to preserve the original context of one of our Lord's sayings. It is as follows: "The Lord saith, 'Ye shall be as lambs in the midst of wolves.' And Peter answered and said unto Him, 'What if the wolves should rend the lambs?' Jesus said unto Peter, 'Let not the lambs fear the wolves after they (*i.e.* the lambs) are dead. Neither do ye fear them that kill you, and can do nothing (more) unto you, but fear Him who, after you are dead, hath power over soul and body to cast into the Gehenna of fire.'"

Here we seem to have the full original context of a well-known saying of Christ. And there is also an original look about another passage, *viz.*: "If ye should be gathered with Me in My bosom, and not keep My commandments, I will cast you out, and say unto you, 'Depart from Me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity.'"

Here we have a very natural play upon Is. xl. 11: "He shall gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom," which hardly looks like an invention. Consequently this gospel must be prior to the Synoptic gospels, as we have them, and may very well have been the Greek Logia. Another interesting quotation is: "If ye kept not that which is little, who will give unto you that which is

great? for I say unto you, 'He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.'” This is introduced by “The Lord saith in *the gospel*.” May we not see here a trace of the origin of the custom of always speaking of *the gospel*, and not the ‘gospels’? If this is really a description of the Greek Logia, or common groundwork of all our gospels, we have a natural explanation of the origin of this usage. All these quotations are introduced either as ‘Scripture,’ or as a saying of the Lord, or even of God Himself. And the fact that we, in all cases but one, have them quoted as sayings of Christ, would seem to point to a collection of Logia.

But what, then, was the gospel according to the Egyptians? We have seen that it was based on the Greek Logia, and made, in one case at least, apocryphal additions to it. The following facts are also known: (1) It was used by the Encratites and Cassian their leader; (2) the Egyptian Valentinian gnostic, Theodotus, used this gospel as well as the Canonical gospels; (3) the Sabellians of the Libyan Pentapolis, a sect which was not quite orthodox (according to later standards of orthodoxy) on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, declared that they found in this gospel a statement that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were one and the same; (4) Clement of Alexandria speaks of this gospel as containing a saying which was not “in the four gospels which have been handed down to us”; (5) Origen plainly declares it heretical; (6) Hippolytus says that the gnostic set, the Naasenes, used it. *Prima facie*, then, one would infer that this gospel was a gnostic gospel, since both the

gnostic Theodotus and the Naassenes used it. It appears to have been very ancient, and, therefore, it is natural to suppose that Basilides¹ (c. 133 A.D.), the earliest gnostic we know of, used it. He flourished in the first half of the second century. He is said to have written a gospel of his own,² but Zahn thinks this was the so-called 'gospel of Matthias.' On the other hand, in the commentary which he wrote on the gospel, it seems certain that he must either have followed the Greek Logia, or the gospel according to the Egyptians. In his gospel he found the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and passages which remind us now of S. Matthew, now of S. Luke, and even of S. John. It is remarkable that he appears to have read 'Matthias' or 'Matthew' for 'Zacchaeus.' This may, as Zahn thinks, have been in his supposed 'gospel of

¹ "The only work of Basilides of which we have any exact information," writes Zahn, "is a commentary on 'the gospel' consisting of 24 books. He thinks that we must leave out of view what Hippolytus, on the authority of an alleged work of Basilides, tells us was the common teaching of Basilides, Isidorus (who is called 'his son and disciple'), and their school. The teaching here referred to is inconsistent, Zahn holds, with the information given us by the older authorities Agrippa Castor, Irenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria. There is, therefore, no satisfactory evidence that the two verses of S. John (i. 9 and ii. 4), which Dr. Sanday, in his *Gospels in the Second Century*, quotes as found in the gospel of Basilides, really had any place in that gospel. On the other hand, the remarks of Basilides in his commentary as to the relation between sin and suffering must have been based on S. John ix. 1-3, which passage doubtless had a place in the original Logia, the source of our Fourth gospel."

² Origen (*Hom. i.*, in Lucam) says: "Basilides also dared to write a gospel, and to give it his own name in the title."

Matthias.' But the evidence for the existence of this gospel seems very slight. The so-called 'Paradoseis of Matthias' may be really the 'Paradoseis of Matthew,' in other words, a recension of the Greek Logia used by Basilides. And therefore, though with some diffidence, I would suggest that Basilides was the author of the gospel according to the Egyptians, which was otherwise known as the 'Paradoseis of Matthew.' Could the gospel have been known originally as 'the gospel according to Basilides the Egyptian,' and subsequently have acquired the more general title 'according to the Egyptians,' in order to distinguish it from the Ebionite gospel 'according to the Hebrews'? In any case, what we know of the gospel of Basilides connects very well with the Greek Logia. And if both Basilides and the gospel according to the Egyptians used the Greek Logia, and both the gospel of Basilides and the gospel according to the Egyptians were gnostic gospels used by Egyptian gnostics, what more natural than to suppose that we have here one and the same gospel referred to, viz. the gospel according to the Egyptian gnostics.

And this result is supported by the facts which are known to us about the gospel used by a pupil of Basilides, viz. Valentinus. Irenaeus tells us that the Valentinians used more than four gospels, and instances their 'Gospel of Truth,' as they called it. This is what another heretic, Marcion, called his gospel. In those days they appear to have spoken of 'the true gospel,' as people do now sometimes of 'the true church.' Irenaeus says that the Valen-

tinians had written their gospel not long before, and that it was unlike our gospels. But has not Harnack exaggerated this statement when he takes it to imply that the gospel of Valentinus was *absolutely* unlike our gospels. Compare the quotation about Salome in the gospel according to the Egyptians and the parallel in II. Clement. For the most part they are unlike, but there is clearly a common basis. And so I should imagine the gospel of Valentinus contained a good deal of Synoptic material. I suspect it was simply the gospel according to the Egyptians, with additions embodying the peculiar tenets of Valentinus. Possibly these additions contained those portions of the gospel of S. John on which Valentinus built up his peculiar system of Aeons. One verse in this gospel, which may be derived from the gospel according to the Egyptians, was, "Save thyself and thy soul." Another peculiarity, which may also come from the gospel according to the Egyptians, was that it represented Christ as remaining eighteen months on earth after His resurrection. This is also found in that very old gnostic book, *Pistis Sophia*. The gnostics pretended to have received special revelations from Christ during those eighteen months.

FAYUM FRAGMENT.

I now pass to the two other fragments of ancient gospels which have been found in Egypt—the Fayum fragment, and the 'Logia,' or 'Sayings of Jesus,' which have just come to light. In 1885 Bickell published a papyrus fragment, apparently

containing a few verses of a gospel. It was found at Fayum in Egypt. The ms. appears to belong to the third century. It is only a mutilated fragment, but Zahn has conjecturally restored it as follows: "And when they had sung an hymn, according to their custom, after they had eaten, He again said unto them, 'This night shall ye be offended, according as it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad.' And when Peter said, 'Even though all, yet not I,' He said, 'Before the cock shall crow twice this day, thou shalt deny Me thrice.'" It is evidently a quotation of S. Mark xiv. 26-30, but the words used for 'cock' and 'crowing' are different from those in our text of the gospel. The canonical expressions are certainly more likely to be the originals, and Dr. Salmon has suggested that the idea of the cock having crowed twice (which S. Mark alone of all the Evangelists asserts) is due to a transcriber's error. It is, therefore, unlikely on both these grounds that this fragment is older than S. Mark. It is, in all probability, a free quotation of S. Mark made by some ancient homilist.

THE LOGIA OF BEHNEA.

More interesting are the newly-discovered sayings of our Lord, which Mr. Grenfell and Mr. Hunt found at Behnesa in Egypt, and published last year (1897). This is the third find of the kind within twelve years. First came the Fayum fragment, then the gospel of Peter, and now the 'Logia,' or 'Sayings of Christ.'

The following is a translation of the seven sayings:

(1) And then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

(2) Jesus saith, 'Except ye fast to the world, ye shall not find the kingdom of God: and except ye keep the Sabbath rightly, ye shall not see the Father.'

(3) Jesus saith, 'I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh I appeared unto them, and I found all men inebriated, and not one did I find amongst them athirst, and My soul laboureth for the sons of men, because they are blind in their heart.'

(4) This, as it stands, is only translateable in its second half: 'Raise the stone and there thou shalt find Me, cleave the wood and there am I.' But Harnack has filled up the lacuna in a very probable manner, and, if he is right, the whole saying will be: 'Wheresoever they are, they are not without God; and as one is alone, so am I with him: raise the stone,' etc.

(5) Jesus saith, 'A prophet is not acceptable in his own country. Neither doth a physician work cures upon them that know him.'

(6) Jesus saith, 'A city built and firmly established upon the top of a lofty mountain can neither fall nor be hidden.'

(7) Jesus saith, 'Thou hearest' . . .

The first of these logia is word for word the same as S. Luke vi. 42. The second has much light thrown on it by a passage in Justin Martyr (*Dialogue*, ch. 12), where the same expression, 'Sabbatize the Sabbath' (a more literal rendering of 'Keep the Sabbath,' etc.) occurs. 'The new law,'

he says, 'will have you sabbatize continually, and you think you are very pious because you do not work one day in the week, not considering why the ordinance was given you . . . if any one among you be a perjurer, or a thief, let him cease therefrom: if any be an adulterer, let him repent, and so hath he kept the Sabbaths of God in which He delights, and which are the true Sabbaths.' Thus it seems clear that we should understand this saying in a moral, and not in a ritual, sense. We are not to think of ritual fasting, but of renouncing the world: and we are not to think of the punctilious observance of the Jewish Sabbath, but of keeping a perpetual Sabbath from the works of sin.

The only parallels in our gospel to the third saying are to the last paragraph, 'My soul laboureth,' etc. Harnack compares the following passages, which all speak of the blindness of mankind: S. Matt. xv. 14 f.; xxiii. 16-26; and S. John ix. 39 ff. He suggests that both the sense and the grammar of the previous part of the saying look as if we had here an interpolation prefixed to a genuine saying of Christ. The transition from a past tense, 'I stood,' to a present, 'My soul laboureth,' is certainly striking. Harnack holds, and I think rightly, that these logia are extracts from the gospel according to the Egyptians. Have we not, in the opening words of this third saying, another strong confirmation of the gnostic character of this gospel? Do they not indicate a distinctly docetic conception of the sudden appearance of Christ in the world?

Much light is thrown on the fourth saying by comparing Ecclesiastes x. 9. I will quote it from

the margin of the revised version. "Whoso moveth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood is endangered thereby." It is indeed very remarkable that we have here exactly these two ideas of raising stones and cleaving wood brought together as in this logion. A further confirmation of Harnack's interpretation and reading of this fragment is found in the fact that the words, 'where there is one there am I,' appear to have stood in Tatian's *Diatessaron* as a saying of Christ. We thus seem to have before us a genuine fragment of the gospel. However much you may seem to be alone, Christ appears to have said to His disciples, you are not really alone, and however dangerous your occupation, moving heavy stones, *e.g.* or cleaving wood, which the wise man instances as so perilous and hurtful, you are in no danger, for I am with you.

The fifth saying has every appearance of being genuine, as also the sixth. Harnack indeed thinks the sixth to be a case of conflation. Two separate sayings of Christ, those, viz. of the city on the hill and the house falling, are, he thinks, here thrown together. But if we think of one of the hill forts of Palestine, the saying, as it stands, seems natural and forcible enough. A strongly built citadel has two advantages. In time of danger it is a landmark for people to fly to—"It cannot be hid"; and again it is impregnable—"it cannot fall." There is again an interesting parallel in Tatian, "A city that is built upon a mountain cannot be hid."

If these sayings are (as both Professor Harnack and Professor Armitage Robinson, on independent

grounds, believe to be the case) taken from the gospel according to the Egyptians, and this gospel be, as I have contended, based on the Greek Logia, we have before us in these newly discovered 'Logia,' a number of extracts taken at second hand by the writer of the fragment from the gospel according to the Egyptians, but really to be traced to the original gospel of S. Matthew. The fact that we are reminded of all the Synoptic gospels harmonizes with my supposition that the Greek Logia formed one of the chief sources of all our gospels.

LECTURE III.

THE GOSPELS IN ROME, *c.* 150–200 A.D.

AT the beginning of this period we only know, so far as our inquiry has yet proceeded, of the use of one gospel in Rome, viz. that which is quoted in II. Clement, which appears to have been the Greek Logia of S. Matthew. The second epistle of Clement was sent from Rome to Corinth during this period, *c.* 170 A.D. Clearly, therefore, the gospel used in it was the gospel of the Roman Church at that date. But about the end of the second century we find the four gospels, as we know them, authoritatively declared to be the canonical gospels of the Church. This we learn from the Muratorian Canon, and it may also, I think, be fairly inferred from the Monarchian prologues to the four gospels, which I shall presently place before you.

It will not be convenient to take the evidence with which we have to deal in this lecture exactly in its historical order, because the most important document of the period, the so-called Muratorian Canon, though dating from the end of our period, reflects light on its beginning. I propose therefore to consider it first.

THE MURATORIAN CANON.

Bishop Westcott (*Canon of the N.T.*, p. 211) writes: "This precious relic was discovered in the Ambrosian Library at Milan in a manuscript of the seventh or eighth century, which originally belonged to Columban's great monastery at Bobbio. It is mutilated both at the beginning and end; and is disfigured throughout by remarkable barbarisms, due in part to the ignorance of the transcriber, and in part to the translator of the original text; for there can be little doubt that it is a version from the Greek."

After examining the character of the Latin translation, Zahn is of opinion that it was made in Gaul in the fifth or sixth century. He next discusses the time and place of the composition of the Greek original. His reasons for excluding Rome as the place of composition do not appear very convincing, and he is willing to waive them if on other grounds it can be rendered probable that Hippolytus was the author. Now, the reference to Bishop Pius and the Shepherd of Hermas prove no more, Zahn contends, than that the writer of the Canon was alive when Pius was Bishop of Rome (138-154 A.D.). He need not have been born before 150 A.D.; and Hippolytus cannot have been born earlier than 153 or 154 A.D. Further, the condemnation of Montanism in Rome cannot be dated earlier than the close of the second century. But just about this time Hippolytus and Tertullian, in Rome and Africa respectively, were vigorously opposing what they considered the moral laxity of

that school of theologians in the Church which encouraged the study of the Shepherd of Hermas, and taught, as Hermas, the possibility of the forgiveness of mortal sin after baptism. Hence the strong protest of the Muratorian writer against the admission of Hermas into the Canon. Bishop Lightfoot held the Muratorian fragment to have been originally written in Greek Iambics, and to have formed part of a lost work of Hippolytus, his *Odes on all the Scriptures*. But, however this may be, there seems to be good ground for believing that Hippolytus wrote the fragment about the close of the second century, *c.* 210 A.D.

Now, the Muratorian Canon contains a list of the books of the New Testament which were then received in the Church, and in this list our four gospels have a place. The first part, which clearly mentioned S. Matthew, is lost: the fragment begins about the end of the account of S. Mark's gospel. Zahn has made a hypothetical reconstruction of the original Greek text from the very corrupt Latin translation in which it has come down to us, and I will content myself with an English translation of the Greek as restored by Zahn. It runs as follows: "He (*i.e.* clearly S. Mark) was present at some scenes of the Lord's life, and his gospel was composed in the way I have indicated. The third book of the gospel, that according to S. Luke, Luke the physician wrote, in the order of the events, in his own name, when, after the ascension of Christ, Paul took him with him as being fond of travel; yet he himself did not see the Lord in the flesh. And as he was able to trace the course of the narrative

throughout, so also he begins his narrative with the birth of John. The fourth of the gospels is that of John, one of the disciples. He, when his fellow disciples and bishops urged him, said : 'Fast with me three days, and let us relate to one another whatever shall have been revealed to each.' The same night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the Apostles, that, subject to the scrutiny of all, John should write all things in his own name."

You must notice that this account of the origin of the Fourth gospel was probably written down more than a hundred years after the time of its composition, and is quite valueless.

The writer goes on: "And therefore, even though the beginnings are differently handed down in each book of the gospel, nevertheless, it makes no difference to the faith of believers, since it was one and the same guiding Spirit who, in all of them, revealed all things that concern the birth of the Lord, His passion, His resurrection, His intercourse with His disciples, His first and second coming; the first in humility and dishonour which has come to pass, but the second in royal power and glory which is yet to come." What wonder, then, if John so boldly, in his epistles too, alleges each circumstance, saying with regard to himself, "What we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears, and our hands have handled; these things we wrote unto you." For so he confesses himself not only one that saw and heard, but also to have been a narrator of all the wonderful deeds of the Lord in their order."

We have here an apology for the Fourth gospel,

and for its apparent difference from the Synoptic gospels, which is directed against the Alogi, a sect which refused to receive the writings of S. John as canonical. They were called Alogi, because they said that Jesus was not the Logos, or Word of God. They appear rather to have called the Holy Spirit the Word of God. Their sect first originated in Asia Minor about the beginning of our period, *i.e.* the middle of the second century. They were bitterly opposed to the Montanists, an excitable sect which indulged in hysterical prophesyings. Accordingly the Alogi wished to have all prophecy kept out of the Church, and they were led by their anxiety to get rid of these prophesyings, to examine the gospel and Apocalypse of S. John. The fanatical Montanists made much use of these writings. In the gospel they pointed to the promise of the Paraclete, who, so they said, had descended upon their founder, Montanus, and in the Apocalypse they found prophetic revelations, which their own prophets and prophetesses endeavoured to rival and add to. "The Alogi" (to quote the words of Prof. Harnack: *History of Dogma*, Eng. tran., Vol. III., p. 16) "charged the gospel of S. John with containing what was untrue: it contradicted, so they said, the other gospels, and gave quite a different, indeed a notoriously false, order of events; it was devoid of any sort of arrangement; it omitted important facts, and inserted new ones, which were inconsistent with the Synoptic gospels; and it was docetic."

We see at once how absurd these charges are, and they are evidently referred to in the Mura-

torian Canon. But I want you to notice that such charges could never have been made, if the Fourth gospel had, throughout the Christian world, stood on the same footing as the first three. We saw that the writer of the gospel of Peter, *c.* 130 A.D., was ignorant of the gospel of S. John, and the few references which very early writers, such as Basilides, apparently make to it, may very well be taken from its source. We are not, therefore, surprised to find the writer of the Muratorian Canon defending the Fourth gospel, *c.* 210 A.D. Indeed, it seems clear that it only won its way gradually in the Church. When did it first reach Rome? There is, I think, no trace of it till it appears in the system of Valentinus. If the gnostics first brought it to Rome, that would in itself help to discredit it.

The Muratorian Canon also apologizes for the difference in the beginnings of the four gospels. This indicates some controversy on that point. If the Logia and original gospels of S. Mark and S. Luke all began with the preaching of S. John the Baptist, and the gospels, as brought to Rome by Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus, differed principally in this respect from those already current in Rome, we have a natural explanation of this controversy about the variation in the beginnings of the four gospels. Supposing that Roman Christians admitted, without demur, that Polycarp had access to genuine apostolic traditions, and willingly received the narrative of our Lord's birth and His genealogy, questions could not fail to arise as to the difference between S. Matthew's and S. Luke's

accounts of these events, as also between their genealogies. This difference between the genealogies was, as we shall see, elaborately dealt with in the Monarchian prologues to the gospels. Then, too, there was the fact that S. John alone began with Christ's pre-mundane existence. Accordingly, it seems to me upon the whole (I shall say more about it in the next lecture), that the gospels, as we have them, must have begun to take the place in Rome of the Greek Logia and the original editions of S. Mark and S. Luke about the middle of the second century, in consequence of the influence of Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus.

POLYCARP.

About Easter, 154 A.D., Polycarp publicly celebrated the Eucharist, as a mark of brotherly love, in Rome in the stead of the Roman bishop, Anicetus. The controversy, which became much more acute later on, about the proper time for celebrating Easter, had already begun to separate the Churches of Rome and Asia. And so Polycarp, then nearly a hundred years old, made a special journey to Rome in order to show that he and the Roman bishop, at any rate, did not intend to let such a trifle separate them. There is an interesting Latin fragment of Polycarp (see Gebhardt, Harnack, and Zahn's *Apostolic Fathers*, II. 171), which throws light upon his attitude to the question of the 'fourfold gospel.' From this it is evident that he, like the Muratorian Canonist, found it necessary to apologize for the variation in the

beginning of the four gospels. "The Evangelists," he writes, "reasonably differ in the commencement of their respective gospels, although their intention in proclaiming the gospel is demonstrably one and the same." Then follows an account of their differences which are examined, and the conclusion is reached, "Therefore, nothing contradictory is discovered, for here, though the texts differ (*licet diversis scriptis*), we reach the same home."

JUSTIN MARTYR.

Justin Martyr also came to Rome from Asia in 150 A.D., four years before Polycarp's visit, and soon after published his two surviving works, his *Apology to the Emperor Antoninus Pius* and his *Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew*. He finally suffered martyrdom in one of the years 163-167 A.D. He had been converted to Christianity in Ephesus, c. 130 A.D. He must have brought with him to Rome the gospels which were used in Ephesus. What, then, are the gospels which he makes so many quotations from? In the large majority of cases they appear to be free quotations, as from memory, from the first three gospels as we have them. He quotes the Fourth gospel comparatively rarely. Some, however, of his quotations may be shown with great probability not to be taken from any of our gospels, but from their common original, *i.e.* as I have before tried to show, the Greek Logia. As a rule, the quotations in Justin, which may with some confidence be regarded as taken from the Logia, are those which occur more than once

in his works, and in each case present the same divergence from our gospels. And when this divergence is also found in the same passage as quoted by other writers, we approach something like certainty. The cases of divergence do not, as a rule, affect the general sense. They are rather minute changes of phraseology, or order. There is, however, at least one instance in which Justin not only combines and changes Synoptic texts, but adds a material detail, which addition is also found in the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," the *Didache* (c. 131-160 A.D.). Such a case is both easy to present to the reader and in itself fairly decisive, though, of course, we might suppose the addition to have been in the oldest texts of our gospels, and to have dropped out by the slip of a copyist. But taken together with all the other cases, this instance fairly proves the use by Justin of a non-synoptic source. In *Apology*, I. 16, Justin writes: "The greatest commandment is: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, even the Lord thy *God who created thee*." The italicized words are also found in the *Didache*, chap. 12: "First, thou shalt love the *God who created thee*." This proves that they are not an invention of Justin's, and that they are drawn from a documentary source is practically certain, and that this source, common to Justin in Rome, and the author of the *Didache* (? in Egypt), was the Logia, seems to me exceedingly probable. It will throw further light upon the way in which Justin quotes the gospels, if we add a parallel

passage in the *Dialogue* (chap. 93). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." Possibly the passage in the *Logia* ran something like, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God who created thee, with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself." For both in the *Apology* and in the *Dialogue* Justin adheres to the form "with all thy heart and with all thy strength"; but in the *Apology* he seems to have been quoting from memory, and to have introduced, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve," from the history of the Temptation.

But perhaps the most striking thing in Justin's use of the gospels is that he does not call our gospels those according to S. Matthew, S. Mark, etc. In fact he never mentions any of the four evangelists, but speaks of the gospels as 'the memoirs of the Apostles,' telling us that they were composed "by the Apostles, and those who accompanied them." This corresponds excellently on the one hand with the *Logia*, if the *Logia* were, as I have suggested, the work of 'the Apostles' with S. Matthew for their scribe, and on the other with S. Mark and S. Luke, who were, we know, the companions of the Apostles S. Peter and S. Paul respectively. Thus it remains a possibility, indeed, it appears to me a probability, that Justin, while he clearly knows and uses the four gospels as we have them, means rather by the 'Memoirs of the Apostles,' the Synoptic gospels in their original form, viz.: (1) The Greek *Logia*

of S. Matthew embracing matter common to all our four gospels; (2) the original S. Mark; (3) the original S. Luke. He tells us that these memoirs were read in Church. This does not seem to have been the case at that time with the fourth gospel; but I suspect that Justin was endeavouring, and with success, to gradually substitute the four-fold gospel, τὸ τετράμορφον εὐαγγέλιον, as a sort of Revised Version with a few additional apostolic traditions for the 'three-fold gospel,' which had hitherto been current in Rome, as in Egypt. Thus we should have a natural explanation of the apologetic tone of the Muratorian Canon.

IRENÆUS.

Contemporary with Justin, but a much younger man, was Irenæus. He was probably born *c.* 130 A.D., and died *c.* 202 or 203 A.D. When about 14 or 15 years old (ἐν πρώτῃ ἡλικίᾳ), as a boy in Asia Minor, he heard Polycarp. He then appears to have gone to Gaul, and was a member of the Church at Lyons. The celebrated martyrdom of a great many Christians at Lyons as described in a letter from the martyrs to the Church of Ephesus, preserved by Eusebius, is generally dated *c.* 177, A.D., but some reason has been shown by Dr. Abbott to date it rather in 155 A.D. We know that Irenæus came to Rome in this year. I shall, therefore, provisionally assume that 155 is the correct date for the persecution of the Christians at Lyons. For some ten years before that, Irenæus must have lived and laboured at

Lyons. While he was on his way to Rome, as the messenger of the martyrs, the aged Bishop of Lyons, Pothinus, died in prison, and a message seems to have been sent, which arrived in Rome as soon as Irenaeus, requesting that he should be consecrated Bishop in place of Pothinus. Now, in the first chapter of the third book of his *Refutation of all Heresies*, Irenaeus answers the question from whom, and how, the Church received the gospel. In this chapter he says: "Now, Matthew amongst the Hebrews published a written gospel in their dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel in Rome, and founding the Church. And after their death, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, himself also wrote down what was preached by Peter, and has handed it down to us. And Luke, the companion of Paul, treasured up in a book the gospel which was preached by him. Then John, the disciple of the Lord, who also lay upon His breast, himself also published the gospel, while living at Ephesus in Asia."

We must remember that Irenaeus had only heard Polycarp as a boy, and he simply reproduces here the traditional history of the origin of the gospels in its barest outline. As a boy, when he listened to Polycarp, the question of the literary history of the gospels would have no interest for him, and S. John would probably have been dead for more than a generation. That he took a very naïve view of the problem presented by the existence of our four gospels, comes out in the fact that he gravely argues: "There are four regions of the world and

four principal winds, and, therefore, the Church, as destined to be conterminous with the world, must be supported by four gospels as four pillars."

It is clear, however, that Irenaeus used the four gospels, as we have them. Both he and Justin brought their gospels from Asia Minor, and, as I have said before, it was perhaps through their influence, and still more through that of Polycarp, that the Church of Rome first received the gospels in that form, having previously used the form current in Alexandria. Irenaeus, too, exactly in the same spirit as Polycarp and the writer of the Muratorian Canon, tries to account for the divergence between the Synoptic gospels in their various beginnings. Evidently there was some controversy on the point, and one naturally suspects that it must have been in this respect *par excellence*, that the old Roman text, and the Ephesine text favoured by Irenaeus and his school, differed. If the old Roman text of the Synoptics began in each of the three gospels with the baptism of John, we can easily imagine that the Alogi would appeal to this old text on the one hand, and to the inconsistency of the Eastern text in its various beginnings on the other. Irenaeus, the Muratorian Canonist, and the author of the Prologues are discreetly silent as to the existence of any other text than the one which they themselves followed, and which would appear to have won its way into acceptance when they wrote. But they all labour to reconcile the apparent inconsistencies between the beginnings of the gospels in the received text. We have seen how Polycarp and the Muratorian Canonist attempt

to do this, and we shall presently see how the author of the Prologues handles the same problem. Let me now briefly refer to a similar attempt on the part of Irenaeus. In the tenth chapter of his third book, commenting on the first two chapters of S. Luke, he deals with the different way in which S. Mark begins his gospel. "For this reason also, Mark . . . commenced his evangelical narrative in this manner." So, again, in the eleventh chapter, he examines the beginning of S. John's gospel. "He began thus in his evangelical teaching," and continues the discussion of the opening words of all four gospels in the next chapter. Then follows a polemic against Marcion and the Alogi; and he finally concludes, "Now, after thus examining the mind of those who have handed down the gospel to us, as expressed in the very beginnings of the gospels, let us pass on to the rest of the Apostles."

. But, it will be asked, how came the earlier text of the 'threefold gospel' so entirely to disappear? I attribute this mainly to the fact that about the beginning of the third century, if not earlier, a bilingual text supplanted all other texts in the Latin Churches. Professor Rendel Harris, in his interesting study of Codex Bezae, in the *Cambridge Texts and Studies*, has shown us that Codex D abounds in interpolations, and that these must have been made by a Montanist hand. He also proves that the original Latin text of Codex Bezae lay before the writer of the *Acts of Perpetua*, and also before the Latin translator of Irenaeus; while Irenaeus himself must have used the corresponding

Greek text. Now, according to Zahn, Tertullian wrote the *Acts of Perpetua*, and Tertullian was a Montanist, who would naturally desire to force the fourth gospel into circulation. For the Montanists based much of their teaching on the fourth gospel. Professor Rendel Harris seems inclined to trace the Latin text of Codex D to an earlier point in the second century, but one is much tempted to conjecture that the bilingual text of the gospels and Acts which we possess in this Codex, was made under the auspices of Tertullian himself. And we can well imagine that a text, which had the support of two such scholars as Tertullian and Irenaeus would receive official sanction in Rome. But a much stronger reason for the predominance and survival of such a text would be the fact that it was the first attempt of the kind. Zahn has argued that no Latin translation existed in the second century, but that Tatian's Syriac was the first version of the Greek text ever made. In view, however, of the light now thrown on the matter by Professor Rendel Harris, we must regard the remote ancestor of the Latin text of Codex D, as the first version of the gospels in any language. And the fact that it was edited together with the Greek text would naturally give that form of the text an immense advantage. It would thus become the received text, and soon oust all rivals. The old papyri, which contained the earliest text, would soon perish and leave no trace behind, except in countries like Egypt, where, by a unique accident, scraps have been preserved in ancient tombs, in which they were used as mummy-wrappers.

MARCION AND VALENTINUS.

The question, what gospels the heretics used during this period, is an interesting one. For some twenty years before Polycarp's visit, Rome had been the scene of the labours of several heretical teachers, some of them men of great talent. Two gnostic teachers, the Syrian Cerdon, and the Egyptian Valentinus, had settled there (*c.* 134-138 A.D.). After the death of Valentinus, his pupils, Ptolemaeus and Heracleon, continued his propaganda. A heretic of very different principles, and an entirely independent school of thought, Marcion, came to Rome somewhat later than Valentinus. At first he was in communion with the Church, but separated from it (*c.* 144 A.D.), when he set up a Church of his own, which lasted on in various parts of the world as late as the fifth century. He gained a very large following, and continued to do so in spite of the fact that many heretics were recalled to their allegiance by the preaching of Polycarp. The gospel which Marcion used was clearly the gospel of the Church expurgated. Its fragments have most likeness to the gospel of S. Luke: for considerable fragments of his gospel are preserved. In fact, we know more about Marcion than we do about any who preceded him. As Zahn has it, it is the last point where, in tracing back the stream of history, we stand in anything like a clear light. Now, Marcion rejected all the tenets of Judaism absolutely. The God of the Old Testament was, according to him, a different and inferior being to the loving God of grace revealed by Jesus Christ. So

he cut out of the gospel everything which, to his mind, savoured of Judaism. It was no part, he said, of the true gospel, nor of the teaching of Jesus Christ. The strange thing is that Marcion was clearly not lacking in critical ability. He was the first person who suggested that the so-called epistle to the Ephesians was really originally addressed to the Laodiceans. But he was so mastered by his foregone prejudices that he dealt in the most arbitrary manner with his materials. Yet his criticism was not essentially different from that of some modern theologians, who would reduce the genuine gospel to the Sermon on the Mount. The latter start with the fixed pre-supposition that all miracles must be eliminated, whereas Marcion started with the fixed idea that nothing Judaistic could have found a place in the gospel of Christ. Allowing for the different standards of thought in the second and the nineteenth century, the mental attitude is much the same.

I have already said something about the gospel of Valentinus. His peculiar views seem to have been based on the Fourth gospel. But we have seen that the Fourth gospel was, in all probability, not current in Egypt before 130 A.D. Where, then, did Valentinus become acquainted with it? We know that he taught some time in Cyprus, before his arrival in Rome. Very possibly, he found S. John's gospel in use in that island. We gather from the writings of Ignatius (c. 110-117 A.D.)¹ that

¹ Cp. Ignatius, *ad Phil.* vii. 1: "The Spirit is not deceived, being from God. For He knoweth whence He cometh and whither He goeth." *Magn.* viii. 2: "There is one God, who

he was acquainted with the Fourth gospel, and what was current in Antioch would also circulate in Cyprus. If, then, Valentinus carried the Fourth gospel with him from Cyprus to Rome, it would not unnaturally at first meet with an unfavourable reception there. This, of course, presupposes a certain lack of direct intercourse, at this time, between Ephesus and Rome. As to this, I hope to say something in the next lecture.

MONARCHIAN PROLOGUES.

After this brief review of the heretical gospels, we will pass to some ancient Monarchian Prologues to the gospels, which have been, on what I consider satisfactory grounds, assigned to the close of our period, *i.e.* about the end of the second century. They are found in the oldest editions of the Vulgate, but are considerably older than the time of S. Jerome. The crabbed Latin, in which they are written, shows traces, like the Muratonian Canon,

manifested Himself by Jesus Christ, His Son, who is His Word, having come forth from silence, who in all things pleased Him who sent Him." It is certainly true that Ignatius may here be quoting from the same source which S. John used, *viz.* the Logia. He refers to it (*Philad.* VIII.) as 'the gospel.' But such expressions as 'the ruler of this world' (*passim*), and 'Christ, my God' (*Rom.* VI. 3); as also the description of the body of Christ in the Eucharist as 'His Flesh' (*Rom.* VII.; *Smyrn.* VII. 2; *Philad.* IV.), and the whole spirit of his letters proved that he breathed the same atmosphere as the writer of the Fourth gospel. He was, as we know, well acquainted with the churches of Asia, and if on other grounds, one holds the Fourth gospel to be the work of S. John the Presbyter, then it is certain that Ignatius must have known it.

of a Greek original, of which it is only a translation. They are evidently written by a theologian, who believed in the Divinity of Christ, but took what has been called a Monarchian, rather than a Trinitarian, view of the Divine Nature. In other words, he believed that God was incarnate in Christ, and had delegated to him His *μοναρχία*, or sole sovereignty. This was a stage through which the doctrine of Christ the Son passed; it was one of the simplest ways of stating the fact that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

I. S. MATTHEW.

S. Matthew, of Judaea, as he is placed first in order, so was he the first to write down the gospel in Judaea. He was called to God from the duties of a tax-gatherer. In his genealogy of Christ he began from two points, one (Abraham) who was first circumcised in the flesh, the other (David) who was chosen as the man after God's own heart; and Christ, in his ancestors, sprang from both of these. And so, dividing it into three sections of fourteen each, and starting from the believing faith (of Abraham) he passed on to the time of (David's) election, and from his election he extended the line to the day of the Babylonian Exile, and from the Exile he traced it as far as Christ, marking the course of the genealogy down to the coming of the Lord, so that while observing the sequence both of number and time, and both showing what Christ was,¹ and pointing out the operation of God in

¹ i.e. apparently, the Son of David.

Him,¹ even in the case of those whose descent he traced, he did not deny the testimony of Christ, present in his operation from the first. For in all these things, the sequence of time, order, and number, and the disposition or plan which they follow, we see Christ our God. For He that was made of a woman, made under the law, born of a virgin, and suffered in the flesh, determined all things upon His cross, that bringing them to a triumphant end in Himself, when He rose again with His body, He might restore to the Son amongst the fathers, the name of the Father, and to the Father amongst the sons, the name of the Son,² without beginning, without ending, showing Himself one with the Father, because He is a single personality.

And, in this gospel, it is useful for those that yearn after God in such manner, to grasp the beginning, or middle, or end, as to understand throughout, when they read, both the call of the apostle, and the object of the gospel, and the love of God incarnate in the flesh, and to recognize this in all wherein they have been apprehended (of God), and still seek to apprehend. For this is what we have aimed at in our argument, both to commit to you an impression of the credibility of the facts, and not to withhold our testimony that the plan of God's operation may be

¹ *i.e.* in the evident fact that His birth completed the divinely planned line of descent.

² *i.e.* He, whom the fathers knew as 'the Father,' was one with Him, whom the sons (*i.e.* our Lord's own generation) knew as 'the Son.'

understood of them that diligently seek to understand it.

II. S. JOHN.

This is John the Evangelist, one of the disciples of God, who was chosen by God for his virginity, and when he wished to marry, God called him to forsake matrimony. And, in the gospel, a double testimony to his virginity is herein recorded, for that he is both said to have been beloved by God before the rest, and it was to him that God, on His way to the cross, entrusted His mother, that the virgin apostle might protect the virgin mother. Further, in his gospel, indicating his own unstained purity, in introducing the work of the Word, he alone bears witness that the Word became flesh, and that the darkness comprehended not the light, placing first the miracle which God wrought at the wedding, in order that (and here he shows what he himself was¹) he might demonstrate to his readers that where the Lord is invited, there should be no wine of matrimony, and, old things passing away, all that Christ instituted should be found new. Whereof the plan of the gospel demonstrates to them that examine into each single act or word in its hidden meaning. Now he wrote this gospel in Asia, after he had written the Apocalypse in the island of Patmos, that, in the words of Christ, "I am Alpha and Omega," there might be attributed in the Apocalypse an unstained virgin-birth at the end of the scale to Him who, in the beginning of the Canon, in Genesis, hath an unstained origin. And

¹ i.e. a celibate.

this is that John, who, when he knew that the day of his departure had come, summoned together his disciples in Ephesus, and after he had shown forth the power of Christ by the working of many miracles, descended into the place which had been excavated for his burial, and after he had prayed, was gathered to his fathers, as free from the pains of death, as he is found devoid of all carnal stain. And although he is said to have written this gospel after all the other evangelists, yet in the order of the Canon as arranged ¹ (by the Church), he is placed after Matthew, since, in the Lord, what is last in point of time is not for its numerical position left behind, as it were, and despised, but perfect by reason of its fulness, and this honour was due to a virgin. But, indeed, I do not expound in detail, either the order of these books, as regards the time of their composition, or their arrangement in the Canon, in order that by simply kindling a desire for knowledge, enquirers may preserve the fruit of their labour, and God reserve to Himself the teaching of His own supremacy.

III. S. LUKE.

Luke was a Syrian by nation, of the city of Antioch, by profession a doctor, a disciple of the Apostles, who afterwards followed Paul till his martyrdom, serving God blamelessly. For neither had he ever a wife, nor children, and he died at the age of 74 in Bithynia, full of the Holy Spirit. He, when gospels had already been written down by

¹ Ordinati.

Matthew in Judaea, and by Mark in Italy, at the instigation of the Holy Spirit wrote this gospel in the region of Achaia, stating himself also in the opening of his gospel that others had been written before. In addition to what was entailed upon him in the mere arrangement of the plan of the gospel, his most necessary task was, in the first place, by the manifestation of the complete perfection of the God, who was to come in the flesh, to Greek believers, to take care that they were not, intent on their zeal for the law alone, caught in the toils of Jewish fables, or seduced and led away from the truth by the fables of heretics, and their foolish promptings. And in the second place, inasmuch as the Nativity had been presupposed in the beginning of John's gospel, his task was to point out, to whom he wrote, and on what ground he had been elected to write, testifying that he had filled up and completed what others had begun. And therefore power was granted to him, after recording the Baptism of the Son of God, to show to all enquirers, in accordance with the knowledge granted to him (basing his preaching on the perfection of the Birth fulfilled in Christ, and to be derived ultimately from the source of all human birth), that an entrance was made through David's son, Nathan, for the birth (which is traced back to God) of Him, who is the indivisible Divine Being, and that Christ caused His own work of a perfect man amongst men to reach back to Himself through that Son, who in Christ, through His father David, opened the way for those that came after.

And to this Luke, not undeservedly, is also

granted, as a part of his ministry, the power to write the Acts of the Apostles, telling how, when God had been received back into the fulness of God, and the son of perdition had been destroyed, at the prayer of the Apostles their number was filled up by the lot of the Lord's election, and so Paul, whom the Lord had chosen, though he had long kicked against the pricks, gave to the Acts of the Apostles their final consummation.

Now, though it had been useful to those who read this, and seek after God, to declare those things in detail, yet as we know that the toiling farmer must eat of fruit which he has reaped himself, we have shrunk from gratifying vulgar curiosity for fear we should seem to have revealed God rather to those who will have none of Him, than to those who desire Him.

IV. S. MARK.

Mark, an Evangelist of God, and a son by baptism of Peter, and a disciple in the word of God, a Levite according to the flesh, who held the office of the priesthood in Israel, when he had been converted to the faith of Christ, wrote a gospel in Italy, therein displaying what was due alike to his birth and to Christ. For in that he set the first beginning of his gospel in the voice of the prophet's cry, he betrayed the order of his Levitical election, to the end that by declaring the testimony of John, son of Zechariah, who was predestinated according to the word of the angel who announced his birth, he might show at the beginning of the

gospel message, that the Word made flesh was not merely emitted, but that the body of the Lord was altogether animated by the Word of the Divine Voice. So that any reader might know to whom he was indebted for recognizing the flesh as the habitation of God, who came therein, and might find in him (*i.e.* S. Mark), the word of that Voice, which he had missed in the parallel gospels. Further, while undertaking the task of writing a perfect gospel, and beginning to proclaim the Advent of God from the Baptism of the Lord, he took no pains to tell of the Nativity of the flesh, which he had seen in the former gospels, but occupied himself entirely in the opening of his gospel with the expulsion of the Lord into the desert, His fast for a number (of days), the temptation of the Devil, the gathering round Him of the wild beasts, and the ministry of the angels, in order that in guiding us to a right understanding, by summarizing each event in brief, he might neither lessen the authoritative evidence for each fact, nor yet stint himself in space for completing the work. Further he is said, after his conversion to the faith, to have amputated his thumb, so that he was held disqualified for the priesthood; but so much did his predestinated election, after it had embraced the faith, avail, that not even so did he lose in the work of the Word, what he had before acquired by his birth. For he was Bishop of Alexandria.

It should be every one's task to study the gospel in detail, and apply to himself its sayings, and admit the discipline of its law in his own case, and understand the Divine Nature in the flesh of

the Lord. And we desire that these things should be first sought out, then, when duly discovered, that they should be admitted, our exhortation carrying with it its own reward, since he who plants and he who waters are one, while He who gives the increase is God.

The reference to an authoritative arrangement of the Canon is very interesting. Scholars have suspected that some such pronouncement was made as the result of a movement to fix the limits of the Canon, which was necessitated by the way in which, on the one hand, Marcion had been trying to cut it down, and, on the other, the Montanists had been trying to add to it. The Muratorian Canon represents probably one point in this movement, and our Prologues another, and probably rather later, but almost contemporary, point in the same movement. There is a clear reference to the heretical teaching of the Gnostics that the Word, or Logos, descended upon Christ at His Baptism, and there is a similar attempt to apologize for the differences in the beginning of the gospels, especially the genealogies, such as we found in the Muratorian Canon. The apology for the beginning of S. John's gospel betrays, one may fairly infer, some such hostile criticism as that of the Alogi. They argued that the author of this gospel must have been a Docetist, because he brought Christ, as the Logos, straight down from heaven, and they pointed out the discrepancy between the miracle of Cana, and the total silence of the Synoptic gospels as to any such event. Our author seems to have been

a mystic, who thought it sufficient to assign a mystical reason for this divergence from the synoptics, viz. that in either case the Virgin Apostle was glorifying the Virgin birth of Christ, and the perpetual Virginity of His mother. The apocryphal details about S. John are taken from the same apocryphal 'Acts of John,' which are the source of the well-known legend that he was thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil, and taken out unhurt. Here, again, we see, as in the case of the Muratorian Canon, how little people knew at the end of the second century of the real literary history of the gospels, or, indeed, of the personal history of the Apostles themselves. The extreme stress which the writer lays on the Virginity of S. John would seem to show that he was an ascetic, and belonged to the sterner and more puritanical party, which was represented by men like Tertullian and Hippolytus; for it is possible to trace two parties in the Roman Church at this time, which may be roughly denominated the Petrine and the Pauline. The latter party seems to have taught that marriage was an inferior state of life, and to be discouraged. The former, on the other hand, like Hermas, would admit adulterers to penitence and absolution, and also, like the writer of the preface to the *Clementines*, encouraged early marriage, and took a less ascetic view of life generally.

We have now passed briefly in review the chief writers and documents of this period, so far as they tend to throw any light on the problem before us. I have purposely omitted one writer, viz. Tatian,

as we shall have to deal with him in our next lecture.

At the beginning of this period, *c.* 150 A.D., we found that the same gospels appear to have been used in Rome which were used at the same time in Alexandria. These included the Greek Logia of S. Matthew, as well as the original S. Mark and S. Luke. Then we saw how probably the Gnostics first brought S. John's Gospel to Rome, and subsequently those great teachers of Asia Minor and Gaul, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus brought their influence to bear upon the Roman Church, and in all probability introduced our four gospels, as we have them. Then Hippolytus and others about the end of the second century laboured to have the Canon authoritatively fixed, and succeeded in securing for our four gospels exclusive recognition. We saw how this effort reflects itself, first, in the Muratorian Canon, which places the gospels in their historical order, and secondly, in those ancient Prologues, or introductions to the gospels, which place them in the order which the Church had recognized as Canonical. That eventually the historical order prevailed is not surprising, since the reason our Prologue assigns for placing S. John second, *viz.* 'This honour was due to a Virgin,' could hardly have gained general acceptance. In both these documents, the Muratorian Canon and the Prologues, the apparent contradictions in the beginning of the different gospels are apologized for, the writer of the Canon contending that in each, one and the same guiding Spirit speaks, while the Prologues attempt to give special reasons for

the difference between the genealogies in S. Matthew and S. Luke, as also for the omissions of S. John and S. Mark. We are therefore, I think, justified in regarding them as the product of the same era, especially as the monarchian and anti-gnostic tone of the Prologues also points to the second century.

LECTURE IV.

THE GOSPELS IN SYRIA AFTER 170 A.D.

I POSTPONED speaking of Tatian in my last lecture, because, although he lived for some time at Rome during the latter half of the second century, his name has become linked with the history of the gospel in Syria. In his one Greek work, which still remains to us, *An Address to the Greeks*, Tatian informs us, "I was born in the land of the Assyrians." Zahn thinks that he was born *c.* 110 A.D. The best English book about Tatian and his Diatessaron is Dr. Hamlyn Hill's. I have drawn the materials for this lecture partly from him, and partly from Zahn's *History of the Canon of the New Testament*. Dr. Hill says: "Tatian seems to have been a man of birth and fortune, and of exceptional literary powers, and occupied for a time the position of a sophist. Animated by a keen desire to arrive at the truth respecting God and religion, he visited many countries, studying closely the worship of each. In Greece he obtained admission to the sacred mysteries; and subsequently he visited Rome, arriving there about the middle of the second century. The effect of his intimate study of the

heathen religions was a conviction amounting to absolute certainty that there was no truth in them, and that they exercised a corrupting and debasing influence on the soul. This was accompanied by a longing to ascertain the truth, and to be able to worship God in a way acceptable to Him. At Rome Tatian made the acquaintance of Justin; and it was probably he who drew his attention to 'certain barbaric (*i.e.* non-Greek) writings, too old to be compared with the opinions of the Greeks, and too divine to be compared with their errors,' in other words, the Old Testament Scriptures. Satisfied that he had found the truth at last, Tatian received instruction in the Christian faith, and became a member of the Church at Rome. Here he continued for many years, writing in defence of the faith, exposing vigorously the falseness and licentiousness of the pagan forms of worship, and instructing converts; here, too, he probably commenced his *Diatessaron*, with the knowledge and approval of Justin. It appears to have been after the death of Justin that Tatian, who seems to have been his successor, began to express views which gave offence to the Christians at Rome, and led to his being excommunicated as a heretic, *c.* 172 A.D." Into the question of the exact nature of Tatian's heterodoxy I do not propose to enter, but shall content myself with two remarks, viz. (1) that very various views were formed of his character, and there is some reason to think that he gave up his peculiar opinions in later life, and (2) that his aberrations seem to have been largely due to an exaggerated asceticism, which made him unwilling

to believe that Christ could in any sense have been
“Born of the seed of David according to the flesh.”

THE DIATESSARON AT EDESSA.

After his excommunication at Rome, Tatian appears to have returned to his old Assyrian home, where he published in the Syriac language his famous *Diatessaron*, or harmony of the four gospels. This he appears to have done at Edessa, in which part of Assyria Christianity seems to have first gained a real hold. Edessa was situated at a point on the borders of the Roman and Parthian kingdoms, and was the capital of Osrhoene, which was what we should now describe as a buffer state between Rome and Parthia. The conversion of its king, Abgar-Bar-Manu, appears to have speedily followed on Tatian's arrival. This name, Abgar, was a common name, held by all the kings of Edessa, and a legend grew up later that one of these Abgars, who lived in the time of Christ, being afflicted with a sore disease, and having heard of the mighty deeds of Jesus, sent ambassadors to Him with a letter. Eusebius, who relates this legend for us, even gives us the text of the letter. “In it he expresses his belief,” I here quote from Dr. Salmon's *Introduction to the N.T.*, p. 328, “That Jesus must be either God or the Son of God: and he begs Him to have pity on him and heal his disease. He has heard of the plots which the Jews are contriving against Jesus, and offers Him refuge in his city, which, though small, is of good consideration, and well sufficient for them both. Eusebius gives also a translation of what purports

to be a letter from our Lord in answer. In some versions of the story our Lord's answer is verbal; in others the verbal answer is turned into a letter by the Apostle Thomas. It begins, "Blessed art thou who hast believed in me without having seen me; for it is written of me that they who have seen me shall not believe me, and that they who have not seen me shall believe and live." The letter finally promises that after Christ's ascension, one of His disciples should be sent who should heal his disease, and give life to himself and his people. Then the story relates that after our Lord's ascension, the Apostle Judas, also called Thomas, sent Thaddaeus, one of the seventy, who preached to Abgar and healed him of his disease. Either the book from which Eusebius made his extracts or an amplification of it is still extant in Syriac. It is called the *Teaching of Addai*, and contains a good deal more than the citations of Eusebius." I will not trouble you with any more of these apocryphal details. We are only concerned with this book, the *Teaching of Addai*, i.e. Thaddaeus, and what it tells us about the gospel in Syria. It was edited, with an English translation, by Dr. Phillips in 1876. The legend of Addai probably originated c. 250-300 A.D., and it proves that the circumstances and usages which it describes had existed so long in the Church of Edessa that their origin had been quite forgotten. Therefore, what the *Teaching of Addai* tells us about the gospel in Edessa may be taken as trustworthy evidence as to the original form of the gospel in that church. Now in it (p. 46) the Apostle Addai or Thaddaeus says

in his parting words to his successor, "As for the law and the prophets and the gospel, in which you read every day before the people, and the letters of Paul, which Simon Cephas sent us from the city of Rome, and the Acts of the Apostles which John, the son of Zebedee, sent us from Ephesus; in these writings you shall read in the Church of Christ, and you shall read nothing else besides." In these words we see a definite intention to state a Canon of scripture. In another passage (p. 36) the *Teaching of Addai* informs us that "Much people assembled daily, and came for prayer at divine service, and for the reading of the Old Testament and the New, namely, the *Diatessaron*."

Now if in one passage we read 'the gospel' and in another 'the Diatessaron,' the full title must have been 'the gospel Diatessaron' (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ διὰ τεσσάρων) i.e. 'the gospel through four.' So much then for the evidence of the legend of Addai.

Before we leave the early Edessan Church of the second and third century, we may notice the close connection which existed between this Assyrian Church and the Western Churches, especially the Church of Rome. It is in the legend of Addai that the first mention of S. Peter's twenty-five years' episcopate in Rome occurs. Of course this is a myth, but it is not unnatural that a very hazy knowledge of the real history of S. Peter should have prevailed in the Far East. Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, from whom I suppose the Edessan Church received its orders, is said to have received ordination from Zephyrinus of Rome, and so through him the succession is traced up to S. Peter, as first

Roman Bishop. We are also told that, in the dispute about Easter between Bishop Victor of Rome and Polycrates of Ephesus (*c.* 190 A.D.), the Churches of Edessa sided with Victor. Nor were they out of touch with the Churches of Asia. For Abercius of Hierapolis, in Asia Minor, as we learn from an inscription on his tomb, paid a visit to Edessa. Tradition adds that he there met an eminent and rich man, Bardesanes or Bardaisan, who was a distinguished poet and philosopher in the early Edessan Church. Bardaisan was, however, a heretic, a follower of Valentinus. Either he, or one of his successors, seems also to have mixed up astrology and Christianity, a not unnatural thing in the original home of the science of astronomy. His followers separated from the Church (*c.* 200 A.D.).

EPHRAEM.

Another source of information about the *Diatessaron* is Ephraem's *Commentary on the Gospels*, which has come down to us in an Armenian translation. You will observe Armenia borders closely on Edessa, and the gospel passed from Edessa to Armenia at a very early date. In the time of Ephraem, who was a most voluminous writer, and lived first at Nisibis, and then at Edessa, there were most flourishing theological schools in Assyria. Ephraem lived in the first half of the fourth century, and two centuries later (*c.* 536 A.D.) the academy of Nisibis still served as a model for Cassiodorius, when he established a theological school in Rome. What a painful contrast to

their pristine vigour the Armenian and Assyrian Christians now present !

Ephraem's *Commentary* is supposed to have been written by him for his lectures to the students of the theological school at Edessa. Zahn observed that the text on which this commentary was based was apparently a harmony of the gospels, beginning with the first verse of S. John's gospel, and in 1881, seven years before the issue of Ciasca's translation of the Arabic *Diatessaron*, he gathered together and published the fragments of this harmony from Ephraem's *Commentary*. It was, therefore, a welcome confirmation of his results, when his table of contents was found to agree almost entirely with the order of the Arabic MS. translated by Ciasca. Whatever doubts may remain as to the text, into which many corrections and emendations may have found their way, we may feel fairly certain that the *Diatessaron*, as we now have it, corresponds very closely, if not exactly, with the original *Diatessaron*, so far as the order and contents are concerned.

It is clear from Ephraem's other writings that he was also acquainted with the Peschito text of the four gospels, and also that he had some knowledge of the Greek text. But he calls the book which he is expounding, 'the gospel,' or more frequently, 'Scripture.' Therefore, Zahn concludes, this harmony must have been regularly and exclusively used in divine service at Edessa at that time, viz. 370 A.D. A single student, like Ephraem, might study a Syriac translation of the separate gospels, but the Church clung to the gospel as she had

received it, *i.e.* in the form of the *Diatessaron*. It was not till towards the middle of the fifth century that this harmony was displaced by a translation of the four gospels. These conclusions are confirmed by the fact that the Syriac translator of Eusebius tells us that another name of the *Diatessaron* was 'the mingled or compiled gospels,' as opposed to 'the separated or distinct gospels.' In the Syriac gospels discovered by Cureton, the ms. of the first bears the title, 'distinct or separated gospel of S. Matthew,' evidently in contrast to the combined or compiled gospel of the *Diatessaron*. The Syriac translation of Eusebius is a work of the fifth century, and in this century, also, in a list of Canons put forth by Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa, he says, "Let the presbyters and deacons have a care that in all the churches there be provided and read a copy of the distinct or separated gospel." No such distinction was made at the time when the legend of Addai was written.

APHRAATES.

Another celebrated teacher of the Assyrian Church of the fourth century was Aphraates. Zahn has proved that he knew and used the *Diatessaron*. The only question is, 'Did he, like Ephraem, also know the separate gospels?' Now, Aphraates lived at Mosul on the Tigris. He lived rather earlier than Ephraem, and was Episcopal Abbot of the Cloister of S. Matthew in Mosul. Writing *c.* 340 A.D. he is likely to have used the *Diatessaron* much more exclusively than Ephraem who wrote *c.* 370 A.D.,

especially as he lived considerably further east. And while we find Ephraem quoting passages from the separate Evangelists by name, neither the word Evangelist, nor any indication of a plurality of gospels, occur in Aphraates. There is no mention of anything save 'the gospel of Christ.' A learned treatise on the Christian Passover, such as that of Aphraates, could not have been written without some notice of the variations between the four gospels by any one who had the gospels in their separate form. Even the question whether Judas was present at the institution of the Eucharist did not exist for Aphraates, as in his gospel it was decided in the negative, whereas Ephraem, who had studied the Peschito, was doubtful on the point. Nor does Aphraates refer to anything in the gospel which can be proved to have been absent from the *Diatessaron*. On the other hand, there is no gospel section in Aphraates which we cannot, with tolerable certainty, demonstrate to have been in the *Diatessaron*.

THE LATIN DIATESSARON.

It has now been proved that a later gospel harmony, which Bishop Victor, of Capua, found c. 546 A.D., and placed at the beginning of the New Testament edited by him, the famous Codex Fuldensis, of the *Vulgate*, is based upon the same *Diatessaron* as that which the Ephraem *Commentary* expounds.

Dr. Hill (*Diatessaron* p. 18), in his account of this Latin version of Tatian's *Harmony*, writes as

follows: "To judge from his preface we might suppose that Victor had not meddled with the text itself; but an examination of the work shows that he must have done so to a considerable extent. It was a Latin version, and Victor has left us the table of contents of the 182 chapters or sections in very barbarous Latin, in all probability just as he found it. But the contents themselves are given in excellent Latin, evidently copied from the *Vulgate*, and forming, so far as they go, one of the earliest and most reliable versions of it. A comparison of the contents with Ciasca's work shows beyond question that it was a version of Tatian's *Harmony* which Victor had. The insertion of S. Luke i. 1-4 and the genealogies was probably the work of Victor, since they are not mentioned in his older Table of Contents, where the numbering of the chapters also differs slightly. In all probability it was he who substituted the elegant Latin of S. Jerome for the ruder phraseology of the *Harmony*; and in doing so he seems to have expunged the little explanatory phrases with which undoubtedly Tatian freely sprinkled the original work, and many of which, in all probability, still survived in the copy which Victor discovered."

THE ARABIC DIATESSARON.

Another and more important version of the *Diatessaron*, already referred to, is the Arabic version. When Zahn attempted to reconstruct the text of the *Diatessaron* from the Ephraem fragments, he made no use of this Arabic version. But the

publication of his work induced Ciasca to procure a Latin translation of it, which was published by him in 1888 in honour of the Jubilee of the Priesthood of Pope Leo XIII. Dr. Hill's English version is also a translation of the Arabic version, which in its turn is a translation of the Syriac, made early in the eleventh century. There is evidence that the Syriac original, from which it was copied, was written in the latter half of the ninth century.

TATIAN THE AUTHOR OF THE DIATESSARON.

So far, we have heard much of the *Diatessaron*, but have found no mention of Tatian's name in connection with it. How do we know that he wrote it? The Syriac evidence on this point, which only begins about the ninth century, is as follows: In the Arabic ms., which has been translated by Ciasca, the copyist has written in Latin on the last page, "Here endeth, by the help of God, the sacred gospel which Tatian collected out of the four gospels, and which is commonly called the *Diatessaron*." A similar note at each end of the Borgian MS. of this same Arabic translation asserts that it is Tatian's *Diatessaron*. We are thus able to trace back the evidence for Tatian's authorship to a Syrian writer of the ninth century. We also find similar statements made by Barali and other learned Syrians, in the ninth century. The former, in his *Glossary*, written c. 885 A.D., says, under the heading *Diatessaron*, "The gospel which is the *Diatessaron* made by Titianos, the compiled gospel:

a gospel made in a general sense on the sense of the four Evangelists (God's blessing be upon them!). It contains neither the natural nor the traditional genealogy of our Lord Christ: and he who made it (Titianos) has on that account been anathematized." If this Syrian tradition as to the authorship of the *Diatessaron* is rather late, it is the sole Syrian tradition on the point, and it is confirmed by Greek writers. Thus Eusebius¹ says, "Tatian composed a sort of connection and compilation, I know not how, of the gospels, and called it the *Diatessaron*. This work is current with some persons even to the present day." Eusebius appears to have known very little about it, and not to have taken the trouble to inquire, since it did not concern the Greek Church. Another Greek writer who mentions Tatian as the author of the *Diatessaron* is Theodoret, c. 453 A.D. He says, "Tatian also composed the gospel which is called *Diatessaron*, cutting out the genealogies, and whatever other passages show that the Lord was born of the seed of David according to the flesh." He also informs us that he found it necessary to remove 200 copies of the *Diatessaron* from his diocese (Cyrrhus, near the Euphrates), and substitute the gospels of the four Evangelists.

THE SYRIAC VERSIONS.

We will now turn to another interesting question, 'Was there any other Syriac version as old as that of Tatian?' This can only be decided by a close comparison of the text (so far as it can be accurately

¹ *Eccl. Hist.* i. 14.

restored) of the *Diatessaron* with that of the other Syriac versions known to us. But we have very little guarantee that our text of the *Diatessaron* has not been altered, and assimilated to later texts. Our oldest witnesses are Ephraem and Aphraates, but, in their case, we only have translations of translations, and these, again, from quite late MSS. So all arguments based on their text are highly precarious. Still, Balthgen's researches have convinced Zahn that the text of the *Diatessaron* is earlier than that of Canon Cureton's Syriac version. This opinion is based on the following arguments: (1) The legend of Addai proves that Tatian's *Diatessaron* must have been exclusively used in Edessa for some seventy years before the date of the origin of that legend. Nor can Cureton's Syriac have originated earlier, say in Western Syria, for then Tatian would surely have used it in making his harmony. (2) Cureton's Syriac is distinguished from all other Syriac texts by the large number of cases in which the texts of the different gospels are mixed up with each other. Does not this point strongly to the derivation of Cureton's text from the 'mingled gospel' of Tatian? (3) Where Cureton's text differs from Tatian's, its readings are such as those of the later Alexandrine text used by Origen. Zahn therefore concludes that Cureton's Syriac version originated in the latter part of the third century, and stands, in order of time, between Tatian and the Peschito.

Till the year 1858, we had only one great Syriac version, the popular version called the Peschito or Simple. 'External evidence as to its date and

history,' says Dr. Hort, 'is entirely wanting.' But scholars had long ago decided on grounds of internal evidence that it was not the original Syriac text. It had, they agreed, undergone revision to bring it into conformity with later Greek mss. than those from which it was originally translated.

Now this decision was verified by the discovery and publication in 1858 of Canon Cureton's Syriac text. This was an imperfect old Syriac copy of the gospels, found by Cureton among mss. brought from Egypt in 1842, and placed in the British Museum. There Canon Cureton discovered it, and published it in 1858.

Again another valuable discovery was made by Mrs. Lewis, five years ago, in 1892. She found in the celebrated monastery on M. Sinai a palimpsest containing another Syriac version of the gospels. In January and February, 1893, the text of this MS. was almost entirely copied by Professor Bensley, J. Rendel Harris, and F. C. Burkitt, and appeared in 1894. Mrs. Lewis subsequently made a third inspection of the MS., and succeeded in completing the work, publishing the final result the year before last (1896).

A considerable controversy is, at the present moment, raging between scholars as to the relative antiquity of these three texts, which are known respectively as Sl., Sc., Sp. Many English critics agree with Zahn that Tatian's text is the oldest of all, and that the rest follow in the order I have mentioned, viz. Sl., Sc., and Sp. But an opposite theory is defended in the latest edition (1894) of Scrivener's introduction to the *Criticism of the New*

Testament. It is there maintained by Mr. Miller and Mr. Gwilliam that SP. is the oldest text, and that S^c. was a text which altered certain passages, because of the zeal of the translator in opposing the heresy of the Helvidians. S^l. would also be regarded by them as a version which introduced corrupt, if not heretical, readings. If you take their view, you must hold that the *Diatessaron* and the *Peschito* existed side by side in Eastern and Western Syria, respectively, till, in the fifth century, the *Peschito* finally took the place of the *Diatessaron*. Personally, I think the other view the more probable one.

THE CONTENTS OF THE DIATESSARON.

It will be as well now to pass to some examination of the *Diatessaron* itself. As its name implies, it is a harmony of four gospels, and undoubtedly those four gospels are the gospels as we have them. At the same time, there are indications of what Mr. Rendel Harris has called a pre-Tatian harmony, specially in the sections about the Passion. It was just here that we found a correspondence with the gospel of Peter. That gospel and our *Diatessaron* both have the cry of 'woe,' which is missing in the story of the Passion in our gospels. What more natural than to suppose that the so-called pre-Tatian is simply the Greek Logia, which must have been in Tatian's hands, as well as our four gospels? In the *Diatessaron*, as quoted by Ephraem, is also found an extra-canonical saying of Christ, viz., "Where there is one, there am I."

This has a striking resemblance to the fourth of the newly discovered Logia, "As one is alone, so am I with him." Here again, it seems simplest to suppose that both Tatian and the author of the gospel according to the Egyptians (if the new Logia be really excerpts from that gospel) both draw from one source, viz. the Greek Logia. And the same remark holds true of another parallel between Tatian and the new Logia, viz.: "A city that is built upon a mountain cannot be hid." Here, both Tatian and the Logia read 'built,' instead of 'set.'

But the fact that Tatian begins his harmony with the first verse of S. John's gospel, and adds that part of the narrative of the Resurrection which is missing in the gospel of Peter, but is found in our fourth gospel, proves that he used and attached great importance to S. John's gospel. We concluded that an effort was made by Justin Martyr and his school to substitute the fourfold gospel of the Asiatic Church for the threefold gospel which had hitherto been current in the Roman Church. One most important result of that effort appears to have been that Tatian carried back the fourfold gospel with him to his Assyrian home, and gave it currency there in the earliest version of the gospels ever published in Syriac.

The only parts of the gospel of any considerable length missing from Tatian's harmony are the two genealogies, the pericope of the woman taken in adultery and the first four verses of S. Luke. One reason for these omissions was Tatian's disinclination to, in any way, connect our Lord with an earthly line of descent. But a further reason may have

been that the genealogies were the subject of considerable controversy in the Roman Church, and in any case the variations between them would present great difficulties to a harmonist. The simplest plan would be to leave them out. Tatian's reason for omitting the first four verses of S. Luke was probably that he did not consider S. Luke to have justified his claim to have set forth the gospel in its true historical order. Zahn has concluded that, in general, Tatian gave a decided preference to the first and fourth gospels in fixing the order of events mentioned by more than one Evangelist, and that for the obvious reason that, being of the number of the Twelve, and actively concerned in the events they were recording, they would be more likely to be correct in their description of them. But you will observe that such reasoning implies that Tatian believed S. Matthew and S. John to have written, not merely the substance of the gospels which respectively bear their names, but their actual text as it now lies before us. Possibly he attributed both the Greek Logia and our first gospel to S. Matthew, treating them as two editions of the gospel by the same author. Similarly he may have held that S. John himself wrote the fourth gospel in Ephesus from materials which he had before contributed to the Logia.

THE CHURCHES OF ROME AND ASIA.

It was not unnatural that he should confuse the two S. Johns—the presbyter and the Apostle. The mythical account of S. John, and the evidently

apologetic tone about his gospel which we found to prevail at Rome about the end of the second century would seem to show that the Roman Church had not much knowledge of the history of the Church in Ephesus during the first half of the second century. Nor would the visit of Polycarp do much to enlighten this ignorance, as he was then nearly a hundred years old. His visit, indeed, rather implies a previous estrangement between the churches of Asia Minor and Italy. For it seems to have been intended as an eirenicon. We may conjecture that the Church in Rome had been largely Hellenized, possibly through the influence of Marcion and Valentinus, while the Church in Asia remained Judaistic, clinging to the old Jewish Paschal rites, and refusing to celebrate the passover on a different day from their Jewish brethren. Naturally, therefore, the Jewish Christians of Ephesus must have drifted apart from the Christians in Rome.¹ At the beginning of the second century we still find the Roman Church breathing the same Jewish atmosphere as the Asiatic Church. Compare, *e.g.* Hermas and S. James' Epistle with the Apocalypse of S. John, which were products of these two churches respectively. But, when we reach the middle of the second century, Rome is found to be distinctly

¹ Hippolytus, writing at the end of our period, refers to the Quartodecimans' regard for what was written in the law, that he should be cursed who did not keep the commandments, and urges that the true Passover had come, and was no longer to be kept in the letter. (*Ref.* viii. 18, quoted by Drummond, *American Journal of Theology*, Vol. I. No. 3.) Clearly the Quartodeciman Christians of Asia Minor were much more Judaistic than their Roman brethren.

more Gentile in thought and practice. Roman Christians no longer treat Easter as identical with the Jewish Passover, and Polycarp finds it necessary to visit the Roman capital in order to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Churches. Justin and Irenaeus, too, find it necessary to combat the gentile teachers who had invaded the Roman Church from Egypt and the East, and were infecting it with their false philosophy; for it is quite clear that Marcion and Valentinus had gained a very large following in the Roman Church. Tradition had ceased to have so much interest for Roman Christians; they were preoccupied with their efforts to reconcile Christianity and philosophy. Accordingly the new generation which was growing up would have very hazy ideas as to the true history of the original Apostles of the Church. S. Peter and S. Paul, who had founded their own church, would naturally be better known to them than S. John, and if they confused an early disciple of the name of John, who had been a celebrated teacher in the Church of Ephesus, with the Apostle of that name, there would be nothing very surprising in this, especially when we remember that the term Apostle had at first a much wider connotation than it has now.

I do not know whether such a view will command general acceptance, but it seems to me a simple solution of the matter. If we suppose that S. John the Presbyter wrote the Fourth gospel, *c.* 100 A.D., and that the editors of the first three gospels, as we now have them, did their work subsequently, we have a natural explanation of the otherwise curious circumstance that the first three gospels

entirely pass over the large number of discourses and narratives which are peculiar to the Fourth gospel. I should suppose that they purposely omitted them because S. John had already recorded them.

In these lectures, which now draw to their conclusion, I have only touched, as it were, the fringe of that very complicated problem which is presented by the relation to each other of the first three gospels, commonly called the Synoptics. But if anything can throw light on that most difficult literary problem it is, I believe, the piecing together of the history of the gospels in different parts of the world. Without some external clue, it would seem impossible to decide between the conflicting theories which various writers, working only from internal evidence, have propounded. In short, the internal evidence can only be rightly gauged by the standard of the facts supplied by the external evidence. But whether anyone will ever be able to reach anything like demonstrable conclusions as to the true history of the mutual relations of our gospels, it is impossible to say.

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